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SVEN HEDIN
NOBLEMAN

AN OPEN LETTER FROM
K. G. OSSIANNILSSON

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION BY
H. G. WRIGHT, M.A.

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QC

Noblesse Oblige!

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PREFACE

"SVEN HEDIN, nobleman!" and the motto "Noblesse oblige," which appears on the title-page, are intended to suggest that the famous Swedish explorer does indeed possess noble rank but not the chivalrous qualities of a nobleman. The book explains on what grounds the author bases this conviction. Sven Hedin's blindness to all the havoc wrought by the German armies in Belgium, his deafness to the sufferings of both Belgians and Armenians, his one-sided admiration for everything which Germany or her vassal Turkey has done, are here exposed in the most uncompromising terms. Mr. Ossiannilsson is skilled in the use of irony, and nowhere does he use it to greater advantage than here.

At the same time he feels indignant that in the eyes of the world Sven Hedin should stand forth as a representative of Sweden and the Swedish mind. In the closing lines of the book Mr. Ossiannilsson repudiates Sven Hedin's right

to figure as a typical Swede. At one time his international reputation and his work as an explorer entitled him to speak with this authority, but Mr. Osciannilsson declares that this right has now been forfeited.

Yet some ten years ago the author was amongst the most ardent admirers of Sven Hedin, and only with regret has he felt himself obliged to disavow his former hero. The opening chapters of the book explain how this disillusionment was brought about. Hedin took an active part in Swedish politics and fomented dissension between Sweden and Russia. His activity was not confined to writing pamphlets on this subject. He made tours throughout Sweden and delivered theatrical speeches, which, however, were not entirely without effect. An atmosphere of suspicion and distrust was created and criticism of the Progressive Government then in power became very violent. Finally, Hedin and his sympathizers (the same as afterwards figured under the name of Activists) organized a great demonstration against the Government at Stockholm. In February 1914 the so-called "Peasants' March" took place, when thousands of people marched through Stockholm to the

courtyard of the Royal Palace. This procession led to the intervention of the King and the dismissal of the Progressive Government. To all appearances it was a victory for those who favoured a strong system of military and naval defence. In reality it meant the defeat of progressive thought, of democracy, of Parliamentary government in Sweden. It was the triumph of those who sympathized with Prussia and her political system of the government of the many by the privileged few.

Mr. Ossiannilsson therefore argues that the attitude of Sven Hedin and the Swedish Activists during the present war is merely the logical outcome of those political sympathies which they had already revealed plainly enough in Swedish home politics.

"Sven Hedin, nobleman!" serves a double purpose. It explains the attitude of the Swedish Activists and at the same time makes it clear how little support they may expect from the masses of the Swedish people.

HERBERT WRIGHT.

BANGOR, 1917.

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SVEN HEDIN

CHAPTER I

SVEN HEDIN FAMOUS

IT was at Lund, one evening late in Christmas week 1908, or about New Year 1909. There had been a dinner at the house of Professor X., a social function which gathered men of culture from far and near—from Scania, from Copenhagen, from Helsingfors. But the main body consisted of inhabitants of Lund, professors and others. It was with a company consisting chiefly of Swedes that I passed through the wintry streets.

The Lund professors keep a good table; there was great animation—it is often greatest at the hour of departure. A buzz of conversation, a ripple of laughter, rose between the low, old houses. Nothing human was strange to us; we talked of wines, hostesses, art exhibitions, old folk-music and some recently started periodical—a periodical is started once a week in slow, old Sweden.

Then some one chimed in :

"And Sven Hedin—"

This was a subject which brought us together, and it was up-to-date. Our celebrated explorer was expected home any day then after a journey which had been the culminating point of his previous travels. Whole columns were written in the papers. The results were said to be immense ; it meant a revolution in the geography of Central Asia. And all over the world a reception was being offered the explorer which vied with that of Nordenskiöld after his voyage on the *Vega*.

The recent discoveries were of such importance that they gave rise to an animated, and in some cases bitter, discussion in the learned circles of the large countries. Particularly in England—the land of explorers above all others—contradictions had been made of this and that in Hedin's assertions. A gentleman named Savage Landor, a grandson of the poet, tried to make out that it was really he who had made Sven Hedin's discoveries.

Mr. Z. asked :

"What are we to say to Savage Landor? Is it merely jealousy?"

"Well, no," drawled some one.

"As a scholar," said Professor Y., "Sven Hedin is perhaps somewhat reckless. He strikes at random now and then, sees everything in large outlines, is not a little of a dilettante, in spite of all his reading and his travels."

"The results," said Professor Å., "would often be scanty, if he did not possess his flow of words."

"He is a braggart, I think," said T., the painter, angrily. He had been interrupted in the middle of an interesting discussion on art. "Confound it! that such a fellow should represent Sweden and Swedish ways. People abroad will have an entirely mistaken idea of us Swedes. We do not bawl like that."

"Come, come," said Professor X. soothingly, who had now overtaken us, "*you*, at any rate, can be heard over half the town of Lund, friend T."

"We do not swallow flattery and distinctions," the painter went on in a still louder voice, "as blotting-paper swallows ink—he is no Swede, I say! He has even let himself be made a noble —bah!!"

"No Swede?" asked Mr. Z., and all at once

there came a silence, whilst a glance here and there stealthily scrutinized our foreign friends, the Danes and the Finn.

"Who are you talking about?" inquired Magister Mogensen, with a malicious smile.

"About Sven Hedin," replied Z.

"Well—and—is he not a Swede?"

"Oh—yes," came the reply in various keys. The Dane's question came like a cold shower-bath. Before foreigners we wanted, after all, to keep our countryman Sven Hedin. We abandoned the subject. And the company separated at the next corner. Professors X. and Y. and the author were all who remained.

"Our friend T. got rather excited," said Y.

"He often does," replied X., "but with regard to Hedin, he was probably thinking of his mother's side."

"Of his mother's side?"

"Yes, his mother was called Berlin, and through her he can count a German Jew amongst his forefathers."

"Really? I did not know that. How is that?"

"I came across the information when I paid a visit to the Town Hall archives at Malmö, and

as we are *en famille* we can mention the matter. On March 17, 1771, the former Jewish rabbi Abraham David Brode of Düsseldorf was baptized at Malmö. The rabbi was christened Johan Christian Berlin."

"Aha! and so now he is a nobleman!"

Professor Y. smiled, and his smile bore a slight resemblance to that of the Dane. It made a disagreeable impression on me, as did the whole conversation.

"I think that our Sven has done us all honour," I said somewhat harshly.

"Well, yes," X. admitted without enthusiasm, "and he has been honoured!"

"He is the most famous Swede at the present day," I said, "and as far as the type is concerned, I suppose that is old Swedish—the Swedish viking, the Swedish pilgrim, the Swedish explorer from Leif, the discoverer of Vinland (America), to Bengt the Traveller, and——"

"And Ahasuerus," interposed Professor Y., who is somewhat of a cynic.

I replied sharply, as sharply as was consistent with friendship. And when an hour later I sat in my train, I felt bitterly that my nation was really too small for a man like Sven Hedin.

I soon found it too close in the compartment: my indignation must have fresh air; I went out on to the platform of the carriage. Above me sparkled the stars, the air was clear and still with frost, and to the rhythm of the engine's throb there surged up a new poem—my poem to Sven Hedin.

This poem was intended to pay homage to the Swede who had done honour to Sweden, to do homage to him as a Swede, and bid him welcome to Swedish soil.

CHAPTER II

THE AUTHOR'S ADMIRATION

My poem was a drop in all the ocean of homage which roared round you on January 17th, Sven Hedin! It is not in order to boast of that drop that I have mentioned it now and even revealed how it arose.

It is rather to excuse myself—and in advance to make a counterblow unnecessary. I paid homage to the explorer—who came from Trans-himalaya.

I thought I understood you then, understood even your lack of Swedish modesty. To that virtue I attached little value, because I had seen how spurious it often is.

It seemed to me mere politeness on your part to let people do homage to you. How could you have refused the doctorate which was offered to you simultaneously by Oxford and Cambridge? Or the Grand Gold Medal of the

City of Paris, or the Humboldt Medal of the Geographical Society of Berlin, or the Emperor William's Grand Gold Medal for Art and Science? Or the Grand Gold Medal of the Japanese Geographical Society, then awarded for the first time? Or all the honours you received at home and abroad—in the form of money prizes, medals, orders, memberships, noble rank?

I do not intend to reckon up all your distinctions. They would fill a small book, or at least a chapter—their special chapter; and perhaps you prefer not to be reminded of them now. You have had to pay for them, before or since, and some day you will perhaps think that it would have been better if you had not been thus rewarded beyond all measure.

In 1909 I thought that you deserved your honours, or that the honours did not give you what you deserved. I called all censure of you jealousy, all criticism short-sightedness, all ridicule the jeering of fools. I even found the ridicule of your recent noble rank absolutely unjustified. Even your letters patent of nobility, which you had received in 1902, I thought

I understood. Your travels often brought you into high society, you sat by the side of viceroys and lords in a circle, where above all else gilded names and sounding titles were esteemed. A mere doctor—a German doctor into the bargain, for you got your degree at Halle in 1892—a German doctor perhaps cut a poor figure amongst people who judged a man by his title and placed him at table according to his rank. A Sven von Hedin, Sven de Hedin, Sir Sven Hedin was immediately placed a step above the contempt of lackeys.

This was how I understood you, and, moreover, in your case, nobility was not humbug. Your exploits, your qualities, dubbed you knight. If any one in your country had merited the distinction which the raising to a higher rank meant, you seemed to be the one. If any one had given proof of the pure, noble qualities, the desire for exploits and bravery, it was you. If any one had done equestrian service to science and so to humanity, it was you. Your activity as an explorer in half-barbaric regions brought to mind the knight who sought the Holy Graal, or the knight who, in the service of his order,

fought the Saracens and cleared the way to Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre.

This was how I understood you, Sven Hedin; in my eyes you were a great man and not merely a great success. You were an honour to your country, to the race which, in spite of all slanderers, I desired to see you represent. You were a fresh shoot on our old tree of heroes. I assure you that the drop of un-Swedish blood which ran in your veins did not make you in my eyes less worthy of the name of a Swedish nobleman. In our House of Nobles there sit both foreigners and bastards with illustrious Swedish names and sterling Swedish achievements.

CHAPTER III

SVEN HEDIN AFTER HIS RETURN HOME

WHEN, after your return home from your last travels in Tibet, you had cleared away all the expressions of homage, you no doubt asked yourself :

" And what next? "

This journey had been the culminating point for you in every respect. Higher fame you could not achieve. Whatever purely scientific results might remain for you in Central Asia, the fundamental, the epoch-making, the sensational discoveries lay behind you. So you could not expect the same breathless interest in your future investigations. You had been a pioneer and a hero, but henceforward you would have to content yourself with the laborious and often obscure task of the investigator of details. You must be satisfied with a place in the ranks, with the struggle for continued interest, and you had to expect sharper criticism and a stubborn fight with those you had obscured.

Your Tibet would no longer be a sanctuary and a dominion; it would be a critical battle-field, a scientific congress, a university where you, however, were only one of the scholars—a scholar whose merits would perhaps be judged by the years spent at Halle and not by the years spent in Tibet.

It would be just the same if you remained at home, worked at your rich material, and from a Swedish professorial chair continued to make contributions to the learned discussion about Tibet and your results. It would be just the same, for you would not be alone in your honour nor undisturbed in your glory.

And nevertheless—just this was obviously the way you had to go, whether it led to Tibet or to a room in a Swedish library. Your task was only half-done, as long as you had not completely transformed your illustrious tourist's achievement into an equally illustrious scientific feat, nay, as long as untouched material still remained to be made accessible.

How did you act?

You did not return to Tibet—which we Swedes have often regretted, and perhaps shall long have cause to regret. And you did *not* accept the

professorship in Sweden which you were offered. You worked at your collections—for the market of light literature, which earned you the gratitude of all boy scouts and, of course, a seat in the Swedish Academy. It is true that you also worked at a part of your investigation at least, for a more learned section of the public, since we read in the works of reference that you "and others have published many large scientific works on the subject."

This side of your later activity has, however, been obscured by other occupations. Indeed, these occupations *outside your calling* have claimed you and your readers to such an extent that the man of science has been forgotten. Is this a consequence of the nature of things, of the quiet investigator's usual obscurity? Have you really done everything you had to do as a man of science? Have you managed to do everything your last journey made possible, promised and pledged you to?

In that case you are still worthy of admiration. In that case your immense misuse of time and strength during these seven years has nevertheless left you time and strength to do something useful.

CHAPTER IV

HIS QUARREL WITH STRINDBERG

YOU were unwilling to tie yourself down, it was said when you refused the professorship offered you. And how did you make use of the freedom you were so anxious to preserve?

I have already mentioned your work in the sphere of belles-lettres. I presume that you yourself characterize them as belles-lettres, these diffuse journalistic descriptions of your journeys in Tibet and afterwards. These infinitely thick and yet very meagre books, with very monotonous adventures and still more monotonous experiences in society. These self-satisfied caravan-diaries, which may to some extent be compared to the diary of old Pepys.

In no other country but Sweden would a style like yours have found eulogists, nor a " literary " production like yours have entitled you to a seat in a literary academy.

However, this may be a matter of taste, harmless on the whole. You had a profession, and might be allowed to figure as a dilettante in another. Harmless too was a passage-of-arms with Strindberg, where you wrote as a dilettante on another subject, literary criticism. You did not do serious harm until you dabbled in a third sphere, which just then was especially fateful.

However, I first began to have serious doubts about you during the last campaign against Strindberg. It was not a glorious campaign for those concerned, but the one who lost most was perhaps you.

I need not criticize or defend Strindberg, but I will try to analyse the situation for you. It was Strindberg who attacked, and his attack on you had neither point nor weight. It was meaningless, and therefore harmless also. You could have taken his disapprobation calmly, you ought to have met his harangue in the usual Swedish way: an offended and splendid silence. You might have used a little strong language in the family circle, or better still to yourself. And if you had replied publicly, you ought to have been content with your first polite and objective article.

Whatever Strindberg proclaimed as to your scientific knowledge, what interest could it have for you? What man of science regarded Strindberg as a specialist in Asiatic explorations? He had once been a dilettantish freelance in this sphere. He had touched on the subject as on so many others. But he was not a rival of yours, and not even the boy scouts paid any attention to his confusion of Dalai Lama and Tashi Lama.

Of course you might have told him about this, if you had wished to reply a second time. You could have disputed his importance as a scientific critic. Now, you disputed instead his importance as a poet and his worth as a man. And "that was stupid, horribly stupid."

For if Strindberg was an amateur in your province, you were equally an amateur—excuse my saying so—in his. In spite of your seat in the Academy, but merely looking at your work as literature, it cannot be named in the same breath as Strindberg's. As far as that goes, you were not yet in the Academy in 1910: you were not elected until three years later. And you had no competence at all as a literary critic. It is true that many appear on this field just as lightly armed as yourself, but that does not make

you any the more competent. You showed your incompetence just by your unqualified judgment of the master, who remained a master, even if he bore you a grudge. Just as you remained a pioneer in Asiatic exploration, whether Strindberg admitted it or not.

You did not understand the position, neither your own nor that of Strindberg.

You were the early and continual favourite of fortune. All your plans had been crowned with success. Your contribution had reaped full recognition. At home and abroad homage had been done to you as to no living Swede. You were a member of innumerable learned bodies, your breast was a map of stars, the Press in five continents sang your praises, nations and kings vied with one another to reward you, as if in doing so they were conferring an honour on themselves and not on you. Your books appeared in many languages, your income was considerable. You were in a position to refuse a professorship, an honour and a position which is the dream and the unattained goal of many a deserving scholar. You had achieved all this—honour, rank, and fortune—whilst you were still young, at the age of forty-four. And your opponent?

Strindberg had made a contribution at least as valuable as yours. He had created anew the literature of Sweden, our prose style, our drama, and had laid the foundations both of our novel-epic and of our modern lyric. He had made contributions to scientific discussion in various spheres, contributions about which opinion differs, often superficial, often paradoxical, but many of importance beyond the estimation of his contemporaries. His literary life-work was not limited to the Swedish nation, it had fructified and created new ideas in foreign literature as well. He was the central figure in the intellectual life of Sweden, and one of the central figures in that of other countries. He was a great man in the realms of culture, who is now named without hesitation beside the very greatest.

And in 1909, a few days after your last triumphal march, this Strindberg celebrated his little-noticed sixtieth birthday. Neither kings nor academies did homage to him on that day. They had never done homage to him, whose mind was neither that of a courtier nor that of an academician. He was a rebel and had only himself to blame, true, but because it was his task to be a rebel, to revolt and to liberate. And,

all things considered, that task is just as important as to map out the deserts of Asia.

The responsibility of the great and their obligations to Strindberg were not the less because he would have refused their customary rewards. His breast was not suited to be a map of stars, for the ferment within was too great, for it was too ungovernable and unacademic. The great, who thought they understood him, ought to have understood that one can reward without appearing to pay, that one can honour without setting oneself up as an instructor, do homage without patronizing—that one can dub a man knight without wounding, and give him his due without its necessarily seeming a gratuity.

It was not only the officially great who in this case remained uncomprehending. The administrators of literary criticism, the leaders of literary opinion, Strindberg's younger colleagues —who in many ways were his disciples—had for ten or fifteen years been his stern instructors. There sat Levertin and criticized the outpourings of Strindberg's heart as if they had been the exercises of a negligent schoolboy. All round in the newspapers sat former admirers of Strindberg, whose whole ideas were derived from

Strindberg, and grew angry because the master had been able to develop more rapidly than they themselves. They did not recognize him, they themselves were copies of him; now the original was to be punished, because he no longer resembled the copies. And there sat everywhere ambitious authors in whose way Strindberg stood. Whilst every work of Lagerlöf, Hallström, and Heidenstam was hailed with unanimous and dutiful enthusiasm, many times not very genuine, every new work by Strindberg was subjected both to microscope and chemicals. It *should* be picked to pieces, it *should* be reduced, it *should* be made harmless, for the benefit of their heirs.

Try to enter into Strindberg's feelings, Sven Hedin! How would you have played the part of a deposed celebrity yourself? How would you care to appear forgotten, surpassed, antiquated, repudiated?

And then the economic anxieties! Strindberg had never had your settled financial position. But as time passed, his difficulties seemed to become greater and greater. The unfavourable criticism affected his readers and his publishers. At times he had difficulty in getting his books printed. His income fell. In 1906, six years before his

death, his income amounted to about £220. That is not much for a great man in the sphere of culture, a man famous all over the world, and a man in debt.

Does it really surprise you that the old man suffered from the mania of persecution? That he begrudged some people their easily earned gains? That in the end almost every great success seemed an insult to himself? That even your greatness, which did not compete with his in the least, was a torment to think of? You, still young, had been honoured with royal pomp a few days before he himself reached his modest festival in solitary old age.

August Strindberg's colleagues and competitors did not comprehend him and had no heart for him. That was natural. But you, Sven Hedin, who were not a rival, and who were a nobleman, you ought to have been nobleman enough to understand and be merciful. You, who had been rewarded beyond all measure, ought to have felt to some extent the debtor of him, who had not received the reward he deserved. At any rate you ought to have shown indulgence. Jealousy is an ugly word, and it comes easily to the tongue, especially in a small country. But,

forgive a heretic, Sven Hedin : *there is justified jealousy*. Instead of taking offence at Strindberg's jealousy, you ought to have helped to remove the cause. Just as you ought to have reminded the high authorities of their negligence. You, who knew your Runeberg, ought to have quoted :

> Give to Stål a medal too,
> Or else take mine ![1]

You said something quite different. You took part in the literary mob's orgy of insults to our foremost writer.

That was the first time I saw you drop your crown in the street, Sir Nobleman !

[1] A reference to a story in *Ensign Stål's Tales*, by the Finnish poet Runeberg. Lod and Stål were two dragoons, the former of whom received a medal for his bravery. Stål was wounded, but on his return to the army determined to win a medal like his friend. He therefore plunged into the thick of the fray, but was finally saved by Lod. In the evening Lod went to his commander and demanded a medal for Stål, using the above words.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

CHAPTER V

HIS AGITATION AGAINST RUSSIA

You published your controversy with Strindberg in 1911, and in 1912 you were again ready for a new contribution outside your profession.

You called it *A Word of Warning*, and no doubt we ought all to have been seriously warned by that word.

The whole thing came as a complete surprise, at any rate to your friends on the Liberal side. In your books of travels you had, as was natural, avoided all political discussions. You had emphasized what support and obligingness you had met with, particularly at the hands of Russia and England. If England was for political reasons compelled to restrict your freedom to travel in some measure, Russia at any rate had put no obstacles in the way of your travels and investigations.

The Russian authorities had on one occasion

placed a luxurious saloon-carriage at your disposal. They had given you an escort of Cossacks, who shared with you the dangers of the deserts and their last drink of water and their last piece of bread on the journey. Russia had in every way tried to facilitate your success. Moreover, you began your career in Russia with a post in a Swedish family settled there. And Russia participated as much as any State in the homage paid to your person and your exploits. Nor were you the first explorer of Swedish birth to find support in Russia and appreciation of his work.

And you had no reason either to complain of England. The restrictions I have referred to applied to other foreign explorers as well as to you. In India you met with the greatest courtesy and an absolutely magnificent hospitality. You were on an intimate footing with the Anglo-Indian Government. At least, that was the impression one got of your stay with Lord Curzon and Lord Minto and their families. For weeks you had been the guest of Lord Kitchener, and he had opened his heart to you with political remarks on the future of Europe. . . . In what direction

these observations ran, and whether they in any way touched on our Sweden, no information was given in your books of travels.

The impression these books left behind was that you certainly could not be called a modest man, nor on the other hand a tactless man.

The *Word of Warning* in 1912 consequently came all the more as a surprise. It was your début as a politician. You took your place resolutely on the side of our Right, who called for a strong defence. That was all very well. But to arouse our "slumbering" zeal for defence, you tried to frighten us by pointing to Russia. You knew—through your travels in Russia—that they were making plans there against Sweden or Scandinavia. You felt that Russia's most fervent longing was to get to the coldest regions of Scandinavia. Russia *must* get through to one of Norway's ice-free ports—the only ice-free ports available for Russia. And you added in your reply to Russian denials, that if you had been a Russian yourself, *your* warmest desire would have been to cut off a bit of Swedish or Norwegian territory. You found the nations' (or the diplomats') thirst for conquest natural and therefore

moral. So you did not find it in the least immoral on the part of Russia to cherish, and eventually to yield to this, her warmest desire.

However, Sweden ought to regard this wish (or longing) as a fact. Sweden ought to arm herself with all her might to prevent Russia from fulfilling her warmest desire. And, moreover, Sweden ought to seek an alliance with some Great Power, which in this case shared her interests. There was only one such Power, and that Power was Germany.

You made these observations partly in *A Word of Warning* in 1912, partly in *The Second Warning* in the spring of 1914, and partly during tours throughout the country between these dates.

A Word of Warning was everywhere received with very mingled feelings. In Russia, where it immediately became known of course, surprise and indignation knew no bounds. The Russians did not know that they had given the slightest offence to you or to Sweden. Your ambition they thought they had satisfied, and with Sweden they wished to maintain the peace which had now lasted over a hundred years. They were exasperated by your ingratitude. They were indignant at this clumsy attempt to sow dissen-

sion between neighbours, whom you would have been just the man to bring together in peaceful co-operation.

They simply did not understand your conduct. A guest, a protégé, who travels home, laden with gifts—and gossips about his host! An explorer, a scholar of world-wide reputation, who suddenly unmasks himself as interested in secret military plans! This was an experience which hitherto—in Russia as elsewhere—had only been usual in the case of Germans!

The only persons in Russia who rejoiced at this self-accusation belonged to the clique which perhaps really dreamed of attacking its neighbours. It is certain that this clique was very small in numbers and very powerless, much the same as the Activist clique in Sweden later on. This minority now got grist in its mill and wind in its sails. This minority, to which you had involuntarily assigned a field of activity, now for the first time derived sincere pleasure from you.

Even in Germany their joy was not unalloyed. They thought that you had gone to work imprudently. They were not pleased to see their plans betrayed in advance. Even military voices were

heard, which warned Sweden not to rely on German help. In reality, Germany had no interests at all in North Scandinavia. And Germany had no desire at all to defend Sweden's long coast.

Well, that was what we heard before the war, Sven Hedin!

In Sweden you found all the more numerous, and in any case all the more powerful allies. Here it was not merely the genuine Activists who rejoiced, those who in 1905 had desired war against Norway. The whole Right was delighted at the new and remarkable results you had brought home—a welcome aftermath of your latest journey of exploration.

They understood at once what use could be made of these results. The shrewder members of the Right no doubt saw through the value of your political discoveries. A few imprudent Russian jesters, young striplings of officers, who wished to appear important, unreliable dabblers in politics, without any influence, these had filled your ears with mysterious hints over your champagne. They, too, had seen through you—through your naïve and uncritical character. They had made fun of you—it is well known that

the Russian is a frolicsome and laughter-loving fellow.

But the leaders of the Right in Sweden needed you and your funny stories. The question of defence in Sweden has a purpose in home as well as in foreign politics. In the eyes of a part of the Right its task is to distract attention from all work of social reform. And above all, to deprive of power every Swedish Left Government, the only one which could carry out a social reform without delaying and spoiling it.

Now, Sweden had for the second time in many decades a genuine Left Government, perhaps for the second time in a hundred years. And this Left Government had as its leader Karl Staaff, who was honest and therefore hated. Under the pressure of the many serious European conflicts, Karl Staaff had worked out a far-reaching, practical, and relatively cheap reform of our defence. This reform surpassed everything which the Right had dared to dream of or to demand, but nevertheless it did not satisfy the Right. For it could not satisfy the Right that a Left Government should show interest in our defence and the capacity to settle it, since all Right Governments had hitherto left it behind them unsettled and neglected.

The Right ought, of course, to solve the problem of defence, or at least to have the honour of the Left Government's solution. Staaff must be hurled from power. So strong a wind of defence must be blown up that it should become a storm, and the ship of the Staaff Ministry should be wrecked. It was you who were to make the storm, Sven Hedin, for they knew that you had powerful lungs and a certain capacity for storms of words. Your *Word of Warning*, even if it was not ordered direct by the Right, showed that you fulfilled their expectations. Your *Word of Warning* was seized on and the Right papers did what they could to restrain their laughter. You were naïve, but you were useful, and to the majority in the country you were an authority. You were at the moment the most celebrated man in the country. You had travelled, you had moved in prominent circles—Lord Kitchener had confided to you his most secret thoughts, you were a favourite at the Court of Berlin. You, if any one, ought to know! Hitherto you had not been known for leanings to the Right, you were not a party man; that must create confidence.

Your self-confidence would do the rest—self-confidence on the public platform is impressive.

Your *Word of Warning* was spread gratis all over the country in hundreds of thousands of copies. Was there a Swede who had not read your *Word of Warning*? Was there any one who did not feel convinced, when Sweden's most famous man took up the question of defence? Well, not everybody in Sweden knows the art of reading, in spite of the fact that all know their letters and learn their catechism by heart. But the pulpit is the poor man's Bible. The orator's platform is the library of those who cannot read. And Sven Hedin was sent out on a lecturing tour all round Sweden, like Corporal Blom [1] in the old days for the same purpose.

It is in reality not very important who took the initiative. You were, as events showed, familiar with the policy of the Right. You were in the company of its leaders, even in the chambers of the Court. You knew what they thought, hoped, and wished there. You, who had called our worthy old Queen

[1] A well-known character in Dalecarlia. He was a sergeant in the Dal Regiment, and went about his native district working up public opinion in favour of a strong army.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

Sophia "the most remarkable woman in Europe"—you were doubtless equally enraptured and fervid about other ladies of the Right in high places.

The tour may well have been your own idea, even if it was inspired from on high. It was staged in your own style. It seems to have been the example of Gustavus Vasa that ran in your mind. Or perhaps it was that of Gustavus III. The "Theatre King" would undeniably be more fitting in this connection—and better than Charles XII, with whom some one also compared you. Most of all you resembled Corporal Blom, of course. Naturally, you were not satisfied with meetings in the ordinary public halls; you spoke in churches and barracks. Your "beloved Stora Skedvi"[1] was, I suppose, to represent the open spaces outside the churches at Rättvik and Mora. Your speech in the mess of the officers of the Dal Regiment was doubtless intended to imitate the "Enchanter King" on the occasion of his first *coup d'état*. They were only to "hold themselves ready," when *you* "blew the trumpet"!

[1] A parish in the Kopparberg district of Sweden.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

This last mysterious expression increased the surprise to a sensation and the natural joy of the Right to enthusiasm. When *you* "blew the trumpet"! When alarm was aroused in the country, alarm in the Government also, and when, finally, an investigation was made, you declared that what you had said, and in any case what you had meant, was a trifle. Such conduct is not necessarily cowardice; it is politics, politics on the grand scale—a great politician must be able to deny and to tone down, to embellish and to forswear, both what he said and what he meant. And it is quite possible that, as far as you were concerned, you did not mean very much. But you knew the plans of the clique you served, and you found the opportunity suitable to surround yourself with the halo of the liberator of the people. You spoke in the districts of Engelbrekt, Vasa, and the Stures[1]; you yourself were a great man, and had no objection to being mixed up with the great men who had saved Sweden before you. Already you

[1] Engelbrekt, Gustav Vasa and the Sture family all played a prominent part in the history of Sweden.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

had freed Tibet from its obscurity, you would also free Sweden from its present inglorious oblivion. You would open up a new era for Sweden; you knew better than most in what connection, and by whose side. A new Golden Age should dawn for the Right, when you blew the trumpet!

The Left was angry and surprised at how much might be said by an agitator of the Right. If it had been a Höglund who had dared to speak of "blowing the trumpet"! A Socialist agitator, who had been caught inside a camp with hints like yours, would have ended in prison. This had been the fate of Socialists for more harmless utterances than yours. It was the case of the Socialist Höglund a few years later. A speech was made by him in general terms within the closed circle of the party, and as a result of incautious accounts in the Press he was prosecuted and sentenced to several years' hard labour, which was afterwards mitigated to one year's imprisonment by the highest court of appeal. Höglund's speech raised the question of a purely passive strike in case of a *coup d'état* by the Right and an

aggressive war by Sweden. The crowd he addressed was not prominent socially nor officially responsible. It was a number of poor workmen. But you, one of Sweden's most influential persons, were allowed without punishment or prosecution to disparage the then Government, and to give hints—which could only be interpreted as threats of a *coup d'état*—to the officers of a Royal Regiment, that is, to the servants of the State and in the buildings of the State. You were allowed to oppose the Government in the State churches, where a Socialist who had ventured to defend the Government would have been silenced, thrown out, and perhaps punished.

Unfortunately, most of the supporters of the Left only saw the comical side of your behaviour. When the Right clubbed together to honour with a silver trumpet him who was to "blow the trumpet," then the whole Left laughed. Then three-quarters or perhaps four-fifths of the Swedish people laughed. For the Left is in a majority, even if it is least influential. But the Left has often begun by laughing and ended by being in deadly earnest.

CHAPTER VI

HIS PART IN SWEDISH HOME POLITICS

WE, who write in 1917, can of course see more clearly what was prepared and aimed at in 1912. But in 1912 there were not many who suspected what lay behind Sven Hedin's agitation, for instance.

To many contemporaries, both of the Left and the Right, it appeared needful and requisite. For a hundred years, or just as long as the Germans have ruled Russia, the latter country has been pointed to as a danger to the Swedish nation. This danger, this fear, has been kept alive in Sweden just by the Germans. And when you, who ought to know Russia well, repeated the warning words which had been familiar for a century, wellnigh everywhere people listened and paid attention. In the eyes of many you were a national hero, an ardent and self-sacrificing patriot.

There are, however, two troublesome facts, Sven Hedin. The first, that there already existed the keenest public interest in the question of Sweden's defences, both in the people and the Governments, not least in the Liberal Government which came into being on October 7, 1911. It is true that the Staaff Government had postponed the construction of the battleship *Sverige*, both for military and economic reasons. Then at New Year 1912 private collections were started, which yielded £890,000, and thus made the building of the battleship a certainty. Nor did the Staaff Government let the grass grow under their feet. The order for the battleship was given, and even this was not enough. The submarine arm, which had been neglected by the Right Governments, was now really for the first time incorporated in the defence of Sweden. The Staaff Ministry or the discredited Naval Minister, Jakob Larsson, provided the largest part of the submarines we possess. He transferred the Swedish naval manœuvres for the first time from foreign to Swedish waters, and thus transformed them from reviews and functions into real defence manœuvres. For the purchase of material for war vessels the first Diet of the Staaff Ministry was asked for

and voted £200,000. In the same Diet the Government proposed, and the Diet voted in favour of, an experimental mobilization in 1912 or at the beginning of 1913 at a cost of £28,000. Credits were asked for and voted for our first military aeroplane. So the aerial arm in our defence is a creation of the Left Government. The grant for the rifle-club organization was increased to £51,000. And the great Defence Commission, of which Staaff was also a member, worked at high pressure in the years before your agitation and during and in spite of this agitation, which was only calculated to paralyse and confuse.

So it was not thanks to you, Sven Hedin, that we got our interest in the defence of Sweden or a new army organization. The interest existed without you, and the army organization was worked out without you. At the end of 1913, Staaff was able to state that the proposal lay ready, and to give an account of the details.

The second circumstance which speaks against you was the form of your agitation. Let us suppose that your warning against Russia had been a necessary act! Let us suppose that on your travels you had heard threatening things,

that your native land had to be warned—and just by you! The natural step would have then been to make a confidential statement to the members of the Government and one of the committees of the Diet. In this way you would have done the same good, but not the same harm as now. Personally you would have fared best by this correct conduct. You would perhaps in any case not have felt quite at your ease on future journeys, but as your native land was in danger in your opinion, you had to make this sacrifice.

But this expedient, the right one, did not please you. With your contempt for the Parliamentary system, you would not enter into relations with anything so paltry as members of the Diet or Left Ministers. Your loyal conduct would have benefited very different persons from those you wished to favour. You would have given the Left a trump to make use of—to use with the utmost secrecy. It was just secrecy which real politicians would have observed, so as not to give provocation to foreign countries and to frighten the Swedish people; just this secrecy was displeasing to your nature. Whatever you had done had occurred with pomp and pride, whilst

the Press of the whole world watched your every word and your every gesture. This time your act would have taken place unseen, you would have been unmentioned in this connection ; without any thanks you would have offered your tribute of love, and your character was unsuited for well-doing in silence.

No, up on to the platform, out into the sunshine, Sven Hedin, so that all the nation might admire your pose as a hero ! So that all looks and all interest should be riveted on your person ! So that all the papers might be filled with your words, so that your photograph might make a great display in every column and in every bookshop window, so that telegrams of sympathy might pour in, the hurrahs resound, the applause roar, as far as the Swedish tongue is spoken ! No matter if the echo reverberates across the frontier and a mighty empire, half a world, starts at the insult ! No matter if the country, which you say you wish to save, just through your loudly shouted words is exposed to just that danger which you say you desire to warn it against !

But, forgive me, then one must also doubt either your common sense or your patriotism.

One supposes that you thought of your own person and the Right party in the first place, and of your country in the second or third. One dares to suppose that you are not concerned exclusively with Swedish interests, that it is in the interest of some ally you are so eager to compromise us, to pull down the bridges and burn the boats of the unfortunate Swedish people.

By your tactics you wished to drive Sweden into the arms of Germany. You told us this clearly enough in your *Words of Warning*. And you confirmed and corroborated it by your later conduct.

It was not you who created our eagerness to maintain our defences, Sven Hedin : one does not need to create what already exists. But you may nevertheless congratulate yourself on opening up a new era. You created a fresh sensation about your person, which had begun to fall into the background. But you created more than this —you created a panic in our people, which is otherwise not easily frightened. You achieved the purposes of your allies—for a time and in a certain measure. You could not put down to your account the collection for the battleship.[1] That

[1] Public subscriptions were started for the construction of a Dreadnought, which was christened the *Sverige*.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

folly was committed quite apart from you. The £890,000 was thrown into the sea in the form of a dear and inadequate and still only half-finished battleship—a ridiculous challenge to, and a frail defence against, the fleets of Great Powers.

But this folly, which ought to have warned *you,* merely egged you on to step forward and to persist. So you had your share in the responsibility for the Peasants' March. A march *en masse* to the capital, an enormous address from the whole country by people the majority of whom had no idea of the purpose of the demonstration. You and your fellows befooled the peasants of Sweden, and others as well. You inveigled them into processions, into waiting upon the King and his Ministers, all of which, as many believed, was to indicate a *vote of confidence in the Left Government, protests against irresponsible camarilla government, nay, even a decrease in the defence taxes already imposed.* That is, just the opposite of what you and your party made them demonstrate for.

You and your fellows, who despaired of defeating the Left Government at the elections, invented this method. The method had been dis-

approved of and made suspect by your own party, when it was tried in order to obtain the suffrage or the prohibition of intoxicating drink. Who has so reviled the policy of demonstration as just the Right? Who has so condemned the street parliament, easily led public opinion, uncritical outbursts of feeling, as just "the party of reality"? But now the policy of demonstration was good enough, now the logic of the feelings, street speeches, and deputations bringing pressure to bear, were all befitting. With the help of the street parliament, Sven Hedin, with the help of irresponsible people and unlawful means, your party succeeded in persuading the King to disavow his Ministry and the Ministry to resign at the very moment it was ready to present Sweden with an effective defence.

For the Left Government *was* not to reap that honour. The Left *must* retain its reputation for neglect of our defences, and the Right, even if a *coup d'état* were required, *must* seize the fruits and the honour of the Left's work on the defence question. You succeeded, Sven Hedin, you succeeded, with the help of your crowds of peasants and students, your street preachers and tavern poets, in carrying out the first part of your

political programme: the weakening of the Parliamentary system, the fall of the Reform Ministry, and the seizure of power by the Right.

This was your real aim, Sir Friend of Defence, and it is in the realization of this aim that your political importance consists.

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTBREAK OF WAR—HEDIN PRO-GERMAN

ONE would think that you had now amused yourself enough, and that you might therefore have returned to your profession: science.

But for the moment nothing came of it. Both you and Sweden were in a state of excitement that put Tibet into the shade. Moreover, you could not very well return to Tibet, at any rate not through Russia, until they had had time to get over their surprise there to some extent. So what were you to do?

Perhaps take a seat in the Right Government?

During these years, from 1912, perhaps earlier, down to the days of February 1914, you had consorted chiefly with politicians. These politicians, the more responsible, that is, had now and again disclaimed you, in order to preserve the semblance of your independence, of course. But how intimate you were with the leaders of the Right was best to be seen in the days of the

Peasants' March in February 1914, when you were admitted to the Palace at all hours of the day and night and participated in the deliberations. The Right and the rulers of the Bernadotte dynasty have always been in agreement, that is one of the differences between the Bernadottes and the Vasas.

But scarcely had the Peasants' March party carried out its desire, when there was again a pause about your name. You were as if blotted out of people's consciousness. Amongst all the candidates who were mentioned, one looked for you in vain. You had done your service, that of the church orator and the silver trumpet. But there was no special trumpet department, the trumpet was no longer required—perhaps you were even asked to be silent.

Painful to hear! but, thank goodness, you did not need to remain silent especially long. You had doubtless a presentiment of this, whilst you, like Sven Dufva, "waited for better days—*and so the war broke out.*" [1]

O joy and delight! Now the day of triumph was dawning! Now all the people saw what

[1] A reference to a character in *Ensign Stål's Tales* by the Finnish poet Runeberg.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

a prophet you had been, now both people and Jonah doubtless expected that Nineveh would be destroyed, and that Jonah would seat himself under his gourd to wait for the fireworks.

By no means, by no means!

Now came the second part of the programme. Whilst the drums were still rolling, the alarm-bells ringing, and the defence organizing itself, the great traveller packed his knapsack and betook himself to Berlin.

As early as the autumn of 1914, the same autumn the war broke out, you were in the capital of the German Empire, and with the German armies on the West front. As early as New Year 1915 there appeared your first "war-book"—*From the Western Front*. This task done, you hastened back to the capital of the German Empire for further transport to the East front, and punctually at Christmas you delivered an equally bulky and equally profusely illustrated book—*The War against Russia, Reminiscences from the Eastern Front, March–August* 1915.

I do not intend to follow your every step at your fronts with slavish fidelity. I shall, to begin with, content myself with a few general observations. Your journeys to the front have been

sufficiently commented on, praised and made fun of, both in Sweden and abroad.

A few chapters later on I shall, however, return to your Belgian excursion and to your third journey. These chapters will be somewhat more detailed. For the conditions I shall confront you with there place you in an entirely new light.

Permit me, then, first of all to compliment you, Sven Hedin! You are a surprisingly good actor! All we who at one time protested that you were a Swede, and above everything else a Swede, we have let ourselves be deceived—deceived by your powers as a rhetorical actor. In our self-conceit we thought that you went to Tibet to afford Sweden pleasure—not only by your absence, but by your return. We thought that, like a good son, you always had in mind how you could do honour to the parental home.

And we imagined—even we who disapproved of your Stora Skedvi—that behind all your ostentation and boasting there nevertheless beat a heart at the thought of the poor, little, much-disputed homeland, to which through your parents you belonged. In your advice to obtain an alliance with powerful Germany we saw good, if misguided, intentions towards Sweden. We thought

it touching that you, a man of universal fame, should be ready to exchange your celebrity and general favour for hatred, contempt, and disdain, on behalf of the little country and the little people of which you condescended to account yourself a member. Our Sweden could never compensate you materially for what you lost through the disfavour of the great world.

Yes, that was what we *believed*, naïve as we were, and carried away by your declamations at Stora Skedvi. That most of us did not *approve* of your declamations is another matter. That we did not even approve of your self-sacrifice, that we thought you sacrificed in this way more than was necessary—the reputation in the world of Sweden and things Swedish as well—that is also another matter. But we thought you were an honest enthusiast, an ardent patriot, a Swede of the same type as former enthusiastic, ardent, patriotic, and foolish Swedes.

It is true that it soon became clear to us that you were acting in concert with a party. But many, nay, most patriots do so. That did not necessarily make the matter dubious and your patriotism suspect.

It did not become suspect until you set out, in the very midst of the danger of war, which menaced your own country also, for Berlin—as if it were *there* that you really ought to be in the hour of danger.

To Berlin—well, to Berlin! Thither it was you hastened, when *Sweden* was in deadly danger! To Berlin—to the Western front—to the Eastern front—as if it could not be conceived, as if you had not been just the one to prophesy, that war might break out on—the Northern front also! As if you had not been just the one to scare us about an attack by Russia; and as if, in expectation of this attack, your place, your obvious place as a *Swede*, had not been by the side of the *Swedes*, and preferably as near *our* Northern front as possible!

To the *Swedish* Northern front, which you yourself had sketched, you preferred the *German* Western front, the *German* Eastern front, the *German*—— Yes, that you preferred things German to everything else in the world, perhaps even to things Swedish—this we understood by your strange tour at the moment of danger, and still more by your

strange tourist's guides, which you sent us time after time from the fronts of absolutely foreign nations.

Absolutely foreign? No, Sven Hedin; then a memory flashed across our minds. Then we were suddenly obliged to remember that the name of your mother's family was the name of the capital of the *German* Empire, and that your maternal ancestor came to us from Düsseldorf.

You and your fellows cast aside this reference with indignation—a drop of blood, what does a drop of blood matter? A good deal, all things considered—it is always a temptation. And that you now thought, spoke, acted, and wrote like a German, this became clear to all your countrymen, though not all saw anything blameworthy in it.

Some of your countrymen sympathized with the way you acted and also with the way you wrote. You received as much thanks and praise for your war tourist's guides as if they had been a part of your scientific achievements. Your bad and bombastic prose was raised to the level of literary style. If you had not already had a seat in the

Swedish Academy, you would probably have landed there now. People only esteemed you the more highly, they "misunderstood you rightly," they perceived that if you had in all haste transformed yourself into a *German*, there was in this an example to others, there was in this a programme, which you had long carried out and finally revealed even to those of a different opinion from yourself. You belonged to those who wished to make Sweden a State in a German Confederation, a Pan-German province, Sven Hedin! To you a *Swede* was now about the same as an *Imperial Prussian*. In your eyes Swedish was a Low-German dialect, which, in order to escape from Russia, we all ought resolutely to exchange for Berlin High-German. You were already a "janz jut jeratener Berliner,"[1] Herr Berlin—I beg your pardon, Herr von Hedin!

Perhaps I shall now also be contradicted. It was not out of solicitude for Germany, but out of solicitude for Sweden, that you visited the German fronts. You were pursuing the thought of an alliance, which you had put into words in your *warnings*. You desired

[1] "An excellent Berliner."—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

to find at the fronts confirmation of your opinions about Germany as the strong avenger, who would also be the strong helper. Through your book, written by an eye-witness, you wished to prove to Sweden that there was no danger in declaring in favour of Germany; that it was, on the contrary, wise and prudent to make sure of the victor's favour even now. By your descriptions of the German war, you wished to *entice* Sweden to take an *active* part in Germany's victories and conquests. You were Sweden's most prominent Activist, and probably dispatched and authorized by the other Activists in Swedish castles and editors' offices.

But this objection is merely a confirmation. You wished to entice Sweden into the war as the ally of Germany. We see how Germany's other allies are situated. They are commanded by German officers, presumably in German. Members of the German Staff dictate the will of the German Higher Command as if to obedient subjects. The Swedish Army's task would be limited, no doubt, only in the treaty of alliance, if even there, to the defence of the frontier along the River Torne [1] and

[1] The frontier separating Sweden from Finland.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

the closing of the Sound to the English. Not even an attack on Finland, possibly on Petrograd, would have limited our task. Little by little we should doubtless have been needed and used on other fronts, both Eastern, Western, and Southern. We should have been food for the cannon before Verdun, food for the ground at Pinsk, and food for cholera in Mesopotamia. We should have helped to deport the fathers of Belgian families at Brussels, to shoot mutineers in the armies of Austria, to plunder and devastate in Rumania, and to support by counsel and aid the massacres in Turkey. We should have had an extremely practical course in geography and in applied German Christianity. We should have returned to Sweden—those of us who could return—with torn bodies, German tongues and consciences, and absolutely without power of resistance, when the Germany which had used us up ordered us to receive Serbian or Ruthenian colonists, German professors and teachers, German Governmental advisers, German laws, and finally the German language. Where we now dwell, there would soon be only a German Confederate State, a German Imperial

province, or a German-Prussian dominion, all according to the conditions which the war brought victorious Germany. But Sweden, the Sweden for which you alleged you were fighting, Sweden would no longer exist.

And with this programme and its inevitable consequences, you would maintain yourself to be a Swede, Sven Hedin? No, alas! what has spoken and written under your name since 1912 has been the drop of foreign blood, it has been the Rabbi David Brode of Düsseldorf. Only a foreigner can feel such indifference to what is nationally individual in the land he inhabits.

But, you object, is he then more national who with folded arms sees conquest approaching? Is it not worse to come under the Czar and the knout than under German protection and German order?

You and your Activists always offer us as alternatives only purgatory and hell. As if either were an absolute necessity! As if the comparative kingdom of heaven we possess in an independent mother-country of our own could not possibly be preserved! Do you really believe yourself what you paint to us?

Do you not believe there are other Powers than Germany, for whom Sweden's independent existence is a necessity? Do you believe that Russia would agree to meet German customs officials at the entrance to the Sound? Do you believe that England will of her own accord agree to the Baltic becoming a German —or Russian—*mare clausum*? For you surely do not imagine that Germany would entrust the sentry-box to us? Nor that Germany would defend us against all the world without compensation in land, influence, and money?

Like others, you have wished to frighten us with the fate of Finland. Are you not aware that that country has had its Activists, its lofty patriots, who were not content with their Swedish citizenship but longed for security in alliance with a Great Power? Do you know the names of Sprengtporten, Jägerhorn, Klick, Hästesko?[1] Do you know that innocent Finland had to suffer for the—let us say, mistakes of the guilty few? Do you understand what

[1] Finnish officers who in 1788 tried to set aside their king, Gustav III of Sweden, and to found an independent Finland with the help of Russia. They are known as the conspirators of Anjala. One was executed, the others imprisoned or exiled.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

mistakes you and your fellows are guilty of, when you seek connection with a Great Power, which is truly not less egoistic than Russia? Do you desire that the responsibility of the men of Anjala should some day be attached to your name too? And you, who pity the Finnish patriots—who have nevertheless preserved for a whole century their Swedish or Finnish language, their Diet, their influence on the destinies of Finland, their peace, their culture—can you guarantee that our Sweden would preserve for a whole century the same measure of freedom in close connection with Germany? Do you know the fate of Sleswick? of Poland? of Austria? of Turkey? Will you guarantee that in another world-war we should receive the same lenient treatment? That our troops would be allowed, like the Finnish, to remain in their native land? That for a century afterwards we should be permitted to retain the name of Sweden, and not, like Sleswick and Alsace-Lorraine, have to translate it into German? But perhaps you even find that *Schweden* sounds finer than the poor Swedish name of *Sverige*?

CHAPTER VIII

HEDIN'S ANTI-DEMOCRATIC LEANINGS

THE explanation for your hesitating Swedish nationality, Sven Hedin, lies perhaps not so much in your extraction as in your education. It is the spirit in certain classes at home here which has enshrouded you.

It is a long time since a refined man in Sweden meant the same as a man of liberal views. Of late, people have read Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* in their own way. They have become enamoured of the title and despised the meaning. "The minority is always right," said Ibsen, but he did not dream of its modern Swedish application. The minority he referred to was that of "the truly liberal-minded," the minority whose distinction is that of the heart. His aristocracy did not consist of the powerful in the community, the leaders with the Mayor at their head. It

consisted of the idealists, reformers of the world, revolutionaries with the love of humanity as their mainspring and the happiness of all as their aim.

Instead of this the minority has now come to mean the socially privileged. It is riches and rank which are the marks of distinction. With these outward advantages there go all kinds of excellent qualities, amongst other things a philosophy of life which is as convenient to those in possession as it is incomprehensible to all others. When these others do not immediately accept this lofty philosophy, they are considered to be revolutionists, the mob, the rabble, the herd, the populace, demagogues, villains, scamps, and so on. All this vocabulary is diligently used, not only in everyday conversation, but in journalistic and polite literature. At least three esteemed young lyric poets have during the last few years made use of similar expressions in poems of an anti-democratic tendency. I refer to Messrs. Gripenberg, Lidman, and Malmberg. No one has reproached them for it; on the contrary, it is good form, it is poetical, to despise "the people." It is also philo-

sophical and scientific to do so; this we find in Vitalis Norström and many others.

If the scientific reaction against democratic optimism has not been able to rise above the stage of emotion, it would be unjust to demand it of the poets. For their sphere is that of the emotions, when it is not allowed to be that of ideas. And the crowd, however many titles and manors it may have, is naturally not on a higher plane than its masters. The religion of leading circles becomes power and money. The leaders create the spirit of society. A man who wishes to get on must beware of mobs, which hinder progress. He ought to do the work he finds laid before him, but above all he ought to worship rank and bow to the purse. A rich man *cannot* be anything but excellent. A person in high place is *by the very fact* a character and a genius. A queen, who has smiled at one, is, of course, "the most remarkable woman in Europe." A lord, who has honoured one with a conversation on international politics, is on that account his country's greatest son. A pasha, whose hands drip with innocent

blood, is by the very fact of his accidental power and success "an extraordinary man and an unusually attractive personality."

Forgive me, if I quote you in this general account of your environment, Sven Hedin. I am rendering you a service in doing so. You avoid appearing an isolated phenomenon, you get company in the dock. It may be that you have somewhat exaggerated the manners which have been common to many. Others have been more supple than you, they have preserved their dignity better, they have united to the general features certain individual traits, which seemed to contradict them. You yourself are all the more interesting, Sven Hedin, in your schematic and uncomposite general applicability, though in you it has become its own caricature.

A State with such a morality would crumble to pieces, and you are at any rate so healthy that you have perceived this. To hold the State together discipline and vigilant organization are required, which replace idealism and enthusiasm. The less good people are as human beings, the better they ought to work as puppets. A State with a minority

in power at the top must, in order to be safe, and not least inwardly, nevertheless rest on a broad basis. This basis is not universal suffrage and such demagogic follies. It is instead general military service, a strict and military training for all the rabble of which the people at bottom consists. The mob must be tamed, the fangs must be pulled out of body and soul betimes, a spirit of slavish obedience must be enforced—a disciplined, monotonous, and self-sacrificing love of authority and a kind of patriotism which is in reality the same as the adoration of monarchs. A patriotism which expresses its rapture at everything which the monarch, his relations, ancestors, favourites, and officials have ever done; rapture at taxes, however heavy; rapture at bureaucracy, even if it bled the people to the bones; rapture at military service, even though one were treated like a domestic animal; rapture at being permitted to obey, to be brought to heel, to starve and die for the All Highest and his privileged little clique.

In Sweden we have still some way to go before we reach this state of society. For

we are a troublesome breed and have a troublesome history, we Swedes. We have never been serfs, like the lower classes in Prussia, and our nobility has not had the same practice with the slave-whip as the Prussian Junkers. We have been a free people, freer than any in the world. It takes time to accustom us to the ideal State of the young supporters of our Right. In some quarters they had given up all hope of us, when they happened to think of Prussia. With the help of Prussia they would probably succeed in breaking our Swedish backs in the end. To facilitate an *entente* with Prussia, they began to preach Prussia's ideas, the so-called ideas of 1914, which have just shown their effects in Europe. I have just given an account of these ideas in connection with the ideal State. It is in them that you, too, Sven Hedin, see the salvation of humanity and of Sweden.

Salvation! Yes, for it was high time that some one should think of saving us. Not only—or in reality—from Russia, where Prussia had for two hundred years engrafted and practised her ideas. But from liberal England

and revolutionary France, these two seats of unrest in Europe, otherwise so easily calmed. From England we had got our Parliamentary system, a form of government which did not suit the true Prussians of the future. From France came the three catchwords, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity—or in a more modern version, Liberty and Humanity.

These pestilential doctrines from England and France had begun to spread their contagion here at home also. Judge Staaff had ventured to urge the Parliamentary system against our most gracious King. The said Staaff had succeeded in carrying out the so-called old age pensions scheme, an invention which meant that the destitute should not be caged up in almshouses nor sold by auction like cattle—a good old custom and absolutely national—but have their old age made somewhat more secure by a pension. This invention was opposed by Sven Hedin and a few other Swedish men of mark, on the ground that all ambition and emulation would then vanish from society. The industrious would have the same lot as the indolent. The genius would receive the same treatment as

the idiot. What you and your fellows meant by this argument was probably that it was no honour to receive the Nobel Prize, when every worn-out labourer got his own little Nobel Prize in his old age—perhaps as much as £14 yearly. And no pleasure to sit in the Swedish Academy, when the mob did not at the same time sit in the almshouse. Various other weaknesses marked the Government of the said Staaff and caused all patriots to fear the worst.

But when the need is greatest, help is nearest. Thanks to you, Sven Hedin, and the Peasants' March partly brought about by you, many designs against the existing distress were defeated. Thanks to you, we got a defence, which was sufficiently expensive to make all future social reforms impossible. Thanks to you, we had our eyes opened to the folly which a humane way of thinking always shows. Thanks to you, we perceived that the real task of life is to slave and fight and to admire the German Kaiser and Sven Hedin. Thanks to you, Sweden began to remind one more and more of her unsurpassable model Prussia, and thanks to you—if you only

had your way—the French motto, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, would soon be replaced by the curt, terse Prussian order: Discipline! Discipline! Discipline!

CHAPTER IX

HEDIN'S MILITARISM

YOUR war tourist's guides are the most agreeable of their kind that one can read. The style is absolutely unliterary, so that one need not think of anything so distasteful as literary people. And the contents are so expurgated that one asks oneself time after time: "Has the author really been at the front?"

The chief part of your interest—and ours—is devoted to the emperors, kings, grand dukes, dukes, princes, counts, barons and so on with whom you have drunk beer. And the rest is captivated by the wonderful German organization—next to His Majesty the Emperor and the Imperial House, the most marvellous thing a tourist has seen.

In all countries occupied by the Germans the most perfect order prevails. Even the sentences of death are executed with a precision and per-

fection of which only a really modern army in the field is capable. Life in the trenches is extremely comfortable. The men eat their sausage, drink their beer, bless the Kaiser, and load their rifles, all at the regulation speed. And when they have at last done their duty, that is, got a bullet in the heart or a shell splinter in the nose, they are immediately interred in the same grave as the remaining five hundred who have likewise done their duty. Discipline is the watchword day and night, discipline holds good for living and dead.

With this discipline Germany must obviously win, and the rest of the world, including Belgium and Armenia, is only to be congratulated on this. Only through the occupation have the occupied countries obtained well-regulated conditions.

A number of persons have lamented over the fate of Belgium. These persons do not know what they are lamenting about. First and foremost it is proved that Belgium was about to let itself be occupied by the English. And then Belgium is itself to blame, because it did not provide a strong defence in time. As for the Armenians, they live—according to your statements to interviewers after your last journey in

Turkey—a happy and idyllic life. Two young Armenian girls, who were brought out, received alms from you and did not seem at all unhappy on that account. And further, with regard to the massacres, they were, according to those of the same opinion as yourself, necessary for order in Turkey. The Armenians were notorious for their revolutionary disposition. Had the Turks not deported and the Kurds murdered them, they would have certainly murdered both Turks and Kurds, sooner or later.

Whoever maintains the contrary is an Englishman. These reprobate Englishmen, who would not admit that if Prussia had not attacked Belgium some one else would. This some one is not difficult to find.

As for the reputed butchers of the Armenians, you have both eaten and drunk with them, and therefore know that personally they are men of honour. Enver Pasha, who with his own hand murdered a Turkish commander-in-chief and a few other unnecessary persons, is an extraordinary man. Von der Goltz Pasha, known also to the Belgians, was, according to all within reach of his arm, an uncommonly beloved man. As for Talaat Bey, he is an unusually attractive person-

ality. He had, according to his own statement to a German journalist, spent many sleepless nights after giving the order for the Armenian massacres. The Pasha of Syria, Djemal Pasha, is a statesman of extraordinary proportions. In his province there was no lack of food; it was asserted that the existing stocks must last for three years. The Turkish people are a magnificent people, for they are excellent material for soldiers, and that says everything. They have shown their eminent qualities, both when it was a question of suppressing the Armenian disturbances which were feared, and also against the English in Mesopotamia. Here 2,500 Turks captured 13,400 British. *Sat sapienti.*

You are, as will be seen, very complete and reliable. We understand that we have before us the celebrated explorer of Tibet, a scientist with the most rigorous methods, a nobleman without fear and without reproach. It is really strange that in spite of everything you have not contrived to make more observations, that in such bulky volumes as yours, with such thorough studies, with such fearless truthfulness, with such impartiality as yours, there should nevertheless remain a few trifles to tell you about your fairylands, on your

return from your latest journeys of exploration.

For you have not seen or heard everything, Sven Hedin! You have heard the cries of exultation, but not the lamentation. For your ears are best trained for cries of exultation. You are a born optimist, you do not believe in the shortcomings of this, the best of worlds; but that is probably because you have obstinately had your eyes fixed on Turks and Germans. When you conversed with other peoples you translated their words into German, into Prussian Court German, and then many things became different. You simply had not the heart—for so kind-hearted are you—to think or say anything which might cause your friends the Germans pain.

But I, mark you, I, who have not your kind heart, I care nothing whether I please the Germans or not, and in the next chapter I shall tell you what are the *real* facts about the Belgium you have described, and in the chapter following the *real* facts about the Turkey you have embellished —or what was formerly Syria and Armenia.

CHAPTER X

HEDIN'S ACCOUNT OF BELGIUM

SINCE its foundation in 1831, Belgium had been a neutral State. Five Great Powers—amongst them Prussia — had signed the treaty which guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium.

The agreement was confirmed in 1839 by a new treaty between the same Powers. This treaty —afterwards called the scrap of paper—bears the signature and seal of the Prussian statesman Bülow (Heinr. von Bülow).

Article VII of this treaty runs thus: "Within the limits stated in Articles I, II, and IV, Belgium shall form an independent and always neutral State. It shall be under the obligation to observe this neutrality towards all other States."

Belgium observed this obligation conscientiously and impartially towards all.

Of course, the neutrality of the State does not imply that its citizens in their private life shall

not have the right to feel and show sympathies for other nations.

It has been made a source of reproach against Belgium that in Belgian cabarets and music-halls chauvinistic French songs were sung. And that in Belgium cinematograph pictures of French military reviews were shown. No doubt pictures of German reviews were also shown, though slander afterwards forgot this. And what then? Is the programme of a cinematograph to be a reason for war?

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that whole classes—the clergy, for instance—were Germanophile. The steel plates for the forts round Liège were delivered by Germany, and if the cannon for the defence were not—that was the fault of the manufacturers. For the Belgian Government had paid in advance for the artillery, which the German works did not trouble themselves to deliver. The Germans needed the cannon bought by the Belgians, for the Germans intended to use the cannon against the Belgians themselves.

The German historian Karl Hillebrand, who died in 1884, has paid a handsome tribute to the Belgian nation and its neutrality.

"No praise," he says, "can do adequate justice

to the governors of the Belgian State, to their prudence, skill, and tact; and their embassies have been worthy of the Government. From the very beginning neutrality was not merely a dead letter; it was observed in spirit and in truth.

"In 1837 France offered a customs union, which was refused and replaced in 1842 by a commercial treaty of no political importance. When Germany wished to bind Belgium to her Customs Union, the same refusal, based on that of the French proposal.

"In 1868 a fresh proposal of a customs union by France was rejected.

"In 1869 Napoleon III's plans with regard to the Belgian railways were defeated.

"The Belgian Government remained neutral in 1840, 1848, and 1855 (alliance of the Western Powers against Russia).

"Finally, in 1870, Belgium had to undergo its great test, and passed the same in brilliant fashion. Its Government immediately obtained assurances both from Berlin and Paris as to the observance of its neutrality.

"Towards the end of August 1870, the armies of the belligerents approached the Belgian frontier, and the Belgian Army stood ready to defend its

neutral territory. A French officer's proposal to march against Lille by Namur and Hainault was rejected by General Wimpffen in the Imperial War Council with these words: 'If we invade Belgian territory, we shall have another seventy thousand enemies in our rear!'

"In reality it is Europe and civilization that derive the greatest advantage from the existence and neutrality of Belgium. This neutrality it is which we have to thank that the war of 1870 did not become a world-war. And if unfortunately —which God forbid—a war should once more break out, the same conditions would doubtless be repeated."

Thus wrote Hillebrand, he too a German, Sven Hedin, a German who *warned* the German Empire not to let itself be tempted by an easy prey. By the occupation of Belgium, he said, Germany will have all the world against her. It will fear the predominance of Germany in Europe. And Germany will have to bear the inextinguishable hatred of a foreign, conquered race.

He was a far-seeing man and a wise man—do you not think so, Herr Hedin?

Not all were so wise, however far-seeing they appeared to be. Or what is your opinion of the

following pleasant words, written long before the war by the German General von Bernhardi?

"France must be crushed, so that she can never raise herself to trouble us. This result must be achieved, cost what it will, even a European war. *The neutrality of Belgium must not stop us.*"

And the *Deutsche Kriegszeitung* on September 2, 1914, had been equally far-seeing:

"The plan for invading France had *long* been thoroughly worked out. To be successful it had to be done from the north, *through Belgium.*"

This plan cannot have been worked out by any one but the commanders of the German Army, in conjunction with the German Imperial Government. But the German Imperial Government had been represented—in addition to forty-three other Governments—at the Hague Congress in 1907. The German Imperial Government had there signed the following articles amongst others:

ART. I. The territory of neutral Powers is inviolable.

ART. II. It is prohibited for a belligerent to send troops or transports, whether of ammunition or other necessaries, through the territory of a neutral State.

. . . . . .

ART. X. It cannot be regarded as a hostile act that a neutral Power should resist, even by force, attacks on its neutrality.

Still later the Imperial Government proclaimed through von Jagow, the Minister for Foreign Affairs (April 29, 1913): "The neutrality of Belgium is established by international treaties, and Germany is determined to respect these treaties.'"

And on the same occasion von Heeringen, the Minister for War, who may be considered to represent both the Government and the Army Command, declared: "Germany will not lose sight of the fact that Belgian neutrality is guaranteed by international treaties."

As late as August 2, 1914, von Below, the German Minister at Brussels, stated that German "troops will not pass through Belgian territory. Serious events will take place. Perhaps you will see your neighbour's roof burn, but your own house will remain untouched."

The same day or evening Herr von Below handed over Germany's ultimatum to Belgium. This ultimatum contained the amiable demand that Belgium should fail in her duty as a neutral State, allow the German Army free passage, open fortresses, railways, tunnels, bridges, *for the duration of the war*, in which case the relations between Germany and Belgium would become "*more*

cordial and durable." Otherwise—that is, if Belgium did her duty according to treaty and defended her neutrality—"*Germany would regard Belgium as an enemy.*"

Please compare this last line, Sven Hedin, with Article X of the Hague Convention just quoted, signed by Germany!

Please put side by side the various assurances of Germany at different times! Observe Belgium's conduct, Belgium's consistent neutrality ever since the foundation of the kingdom! Then condemn Belgium and acquit Germany! What do you say? What have you to reply?

As early as August 2nd Belgium made an inquiry. The reply was a shrug of the shoulders. On August 3rd Belgium repeated her question through Baron Beyens to Herr von Jagow: "Have you anything to reproach us with?" Germany replied through Herr von Jagow: "*Germany cannot reproach Belgium with anything, and Belgium's attitude has always been perfectly correct*"!

Jagow's acknowledgment was confirmed by the Imperial Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, in the German Reichstag on August 4, 1914: "Our troops have perhaps already invaded Belgium.

This is contrary to the provisions of international law. We shall atone for *the wrong we thus commit* when our military aim is achieved."

Through its two most prominent representatives the German Empire had acknowledged that Belgium was innocent, and that Germany had committed a crime against the innocent.

Perhaps you also, Herr Hedin, will therefore be compelled to confess that Germany committed the crime and that Belgium was innocent?

A crime? What crime? you reply, somewhat dazed. But the Chancellor added that Germany's difficult position required this slight irregularity. "Necessity knows no law," said Bethmann-Hollweg, and his colleague Cæsar two thousand years ago said: "Young man, in war the laws are silent."

Just so much then, Herr Hedin, has the sense of right and wrong developed in two thousand years, in two thousand chiefly Christian years, Sven Hedin! Here is a poser: Can you tell me what has really been the importance of Christianity? What is really the good of our paying church taxes, of our having queens who are Pietists, and of our explorers also at times pretending to be the same?

"Necessity knows no law," you reply, still with a broad sweep of the hand.

Is this really true, Sven Hedin, is this really your opinion? For instance, that a hungry person may suddenly, without leave, come in and sit down at your dining-table—a big, strong, and very hungry fellow, against whom your own bodily strength avails nothing? An escaped criminal perhaps, who needs a ticket to America—and consequently, with his revolver held to your head, makes you hand over your pocket-book? Necessity knows no law. A person who perhaps sees himself obliged to shoot you, because he does not trust your honest face. You might betray him to the police, and necessity knows no law. Well, if he is caught afterwards, he can imitate your sweeping gesture and reply to all the questions of the judge with: "Necessity knows no law!"

"No doubt," the judge will then perhaps reply, "but necessity, which has broken the law, we put in prison."

Otherwise all the criminals in the world might defend themselves with the catchword "Necessity knows no law." A league of burglars, a band of thieves, might defend themselves with that

phrase, and then Heaven help our houses, pocket-books, and lives, Sven Hedin!

But if you do not approve of such instances from private life as compared with public affairs, with States and their differences, what do you say to the people, the masses, the great international majorities, which as yet let themselves be ruled by cliques, let themselves be sweated and starved? Just imagine, if *their necessity*—palpable enough in the days of peace, but absolutely glaring in time of war—just imagine, *if the necessity of the masses knew no law*! Just imagine, if you—the anti-revolutionary—should be forced to acknowledge the justification of violent revolution! Imagine if that truth or untruth, that thought, that phrase, became a recognized watch-word, a dogma for the strong, dogma-believing masses! What then, Sven Hedin? Well, then there would be to-morrow no Kaiser Wilhelm, no emperors, kings, or upper class cliques any longer! They would be swept away—by all means — by murder, execution, imprisonment, degradation, forced labour — what then? — for necessity—the great general necessity—"Necessity knows no law"!

You, Sven Hedin, the obedient and pernicious

tool of the governing clique, you would perhaps be one of the first victims of the masses' instinct for self-preservation.

* * * * *

Whilst those concerned were planning their crime, they acknowledged it as a crime. When the crime had been committed, when Belgium, and its proud, brave, and honest people had been felled to the ground, the criminal began to seek for *legitimate reasons* to commit the crime.

Rather late, one thinks, or what do you say, Sven Hedin? As a rule one does not pass sentence of death *before* one knows what the condemned man is to be charged with.

The army of invasion, already at home amidst the ruins of peaceful little homes, produced with delight from these very ruins the proofs of the guilt of those attacked.

In what did the crime of Belgium consist? O wonderful, Belgium herself had already violated her neutrality in 1906! She had repeated her crime in 1912! She had applied to England for help against Germany! In 1906 Belgium had, through the English Colonel Barnardiston, *concluded an agreement* with England, that England, *in case* Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium,

should send 100,000 men—where? Why, to France! To be transported from there to Belgium. *O Tod und Hölle! Welch tückischer Verrat!*[1] And how fortunate for Germany!

Is it not so, Sven Hedin, you think so too? You too feel your German conscience absolutely soothed by this dreadful discovery? Such a step on the part of Belgium as early as 1906, and repeated in 1912, undeniably required that Belgium should be laid in ruins in 1914.

For my part, I, who have not a German, but an ordinary human conscience, cannot share the opinion of yourself and Germany. If Belgium had reason to fear an attack by one of her neighbours, she was absolutely right in assuring herself of help from some other neighbour. By this request for help Belgium broke none of her treaties of neutrality. By an appeal to England for help —*in case Germany should attack*—Belgium merely reminded England, one of the guaranteeing Powers, of her duty to fulfil the obligation she had signed. Unless the guarantee of a Great Power is to remain a dead letter, it must involve the obligation of intervention as soon as neutrality *has been really violated* in some other quarter.

[1] O death and hell! What insidious treachery!

This is what was presupposed by the agreement of 1906 between Belgium and England, which was published by Germany with such malicious jubilation, is it not so? The condition—a previous violation by Germany—was expressly mentioned in the treaty published by Germany.

Let us think, Sven Hedin! Not especially profoundly, but with a little logic! If Belgium had had reason to suspect England of entertaining plans for a military landing in Belgium, for a violation of the neutrality she had confirmed, would not Germany and consequently yourself have found it in order that Belgium should have applied to Germany—a Power guaranteeing her neutrality—with a request for help *in case England landed troops*? Would not Belgium then have acted quite loyally—towards *all* parties—and above all towards her sworn neutrality?

Beyond all doubt!

But, you may say, such an agreement must be made with the greatest secrecy. It ought not to be known to the third party. Otherwise it might just bring about what it sought to avoid.

Quite so! This was also the opinion of the Belgian Government. The latter was so prudent

that it feared even the semblance of negotiations with one of the guarantors behind the backs of the others. So it was that Belgium really neglected one precautionary measure which we now see to have been most necessary. So it was, Sven Hedin, that *the Belgian Government never concluded any agreement of a military nature with either England or any other of the protecting Powers. So it was that the Belgian Government did not even negotiate with England about anything of the kind. Nay, so it was (just imagine how strange, Sven Hedin) that the proud Empire of Germany built up its accusation either on an inexcusable negligence in translating or on a falsification by the translator!*

Perhaps you raise your indifferent eyelids a little, Sven Hedin.

"How so?" you ask.

Well, the *treaty* which in 1906—and 1912—was *concluded* between England and Belgium was first and foremost no *treaty*, in the second place it was never *concluded*, and in the third neither England nor Belgium took any *official* notice of this *treaty, which was never concluded*, and therefore was no *treaty* at all.

"How so?" you still ask, though of course you know what it is all about.

The facts in all their simplicity are these: An English Lieutenant-Colonel, Barnardiston, Military Attaché at Brussels, had in 1906 a conversation with General Ducarne, the chief of the Belgian General Staff, the purport of which was that the *British General Staff* was anxious on account of the general political situation, and had thought of sending 100,000 men *in case Belgium was attacked by Germany*. The landing would take place in the region of Dunkirk and Calais (that is, in France). In conclusion, Barnardiston emphasized (1) that their "*conversation* should be absolutely confidential, (2) that it should not bind the British Government, (3) that the British Ambassador, the British General Staff, Ducarne and Barnardiston were the parties aware of the matter, and (4) that Barnardiston did not know whether the opinion of his Sovereign had been obtained in advance." Then follows in the Belgian text the date—September, 1906.

The German translation, which appeared in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for November 25, 1914, contained three small errors, one a mistake in translating, the second an addition made out of zeal, the third a little omission.

The word *conversation* was translated by *agreement* (*convention, Abkommen*). And before the date there stood in the translation, but not in the original: *abgeschlossen — concluded.* And in addition they forgot to translate the words: "*in case Belgium was attacked by Germany*"!

You may reply that in the *Allgemeine Norddeutsche Zeitung* a facsimile of the original was also published. But how many in Germany read the text of the original? How many suspected the translator of such obvious blunders? *In the meantime* and before the correction came—if it ever reached the eyes of the German public—*an opinion had been formed.* The masses of the German people, ignorant of foreign languages, who had perhaps just before pitied Belgium, now found their Government quite within its rights!

And in the meantime opinion was adulterated by new "revelations." New treaties—this time of 1912, and between the Military Attaché, Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, and General Jungbluth. As if all conversations could be called negotiations, and as if all negotiations led to treaties! Or as if in this case any treaties were necessary to pledge England to do her duty by Belgium, as

one of the Powers guaranteeing Belgian neutrality!

But Germany needed this interpretation—needed the careless translator!

It was therefore Germany that transformed a few private *conversations* between an English and a Belgian officer into a secret *treaty*. And it was the skilful German translator who on November 25, 1914, concluded a treaty between Belgium and England.

Somewhat unnecessary, one thinks, or what do you say, Sven Hedin? For on November 25, 1914, Belgium and England *had* really concluded a formal and official treaty! Did the German translator wish to indicate symbolically that this latter treaty had in reality been created by Germany through her violation of the neutrality of a little loyal, only too loyal, and defenceless, only too defenceless, country?

* * * * *

So now we are in the midst of the crime, Sven Hedin: a crime which can never be defended—not even by the most skilful translations; a crime which can never be excused

—not even by the convenient untruth that necessity knows no law.

Necessity does know law, Sven Hedin. A man may not under *any* circumstances do *whatever he please*. Nor may a State. For were the individual man ever allowed to do wrong, all morality would thereby be done away with, and the State would fall to pieces. Were the State ever allowed to do wrong, all common life of States and nations would cease. It would be anarchy, general dissolution; it would be the age of migrations, the Huns and Vandals, over again; it would be Ragnarok, and it *is* perhaps already Ragnarok, but it is passing strange to hear a conservative man, a preserver of society like yourself, admiring Ragnarok! . . .

You imagine, of course, that your idol will create order out of chaos. He cannot, Sven Hedin. What he has destroyed by his "necessity knows no law" consists not merely of towns and fortresses, prosperity and human happiness—he has destroyed the very foundations of all this: confidence between one man and another, faith in promises and agreements, in truth, right, and honour, nay, in the very

moral principles which we believed eternal and which alone are able to support society. Might and violence do not replace right. Organization does not replace morality. However skilful the organization, however thorough the system of espionage and punishment, they avail nothing against the corruption which destroys the State and which is a consequence of the collapse of morality.

"Wars have been waged before 1914," you will perhaps answer; "the strong have attacked the weak: that is the law of life."

But it is not the law of *civilization*, of humane civilization, whose servant you too have been — the civilization which would be entirely indifferent to us, did it not aim at interpreting and living life in a nobler fashion. If it is the law of primitive life that the strong should attack the weak, then the law of civilized life is different: namely, that the strong should spare and protect the weak. Civilization has created and fostered just those instincts which we call noble, Sir Nobleman: namely, magnanimity, chivalrousness, leniency, considerateness. If these instincts are lack

ing in a civilization, we consider it a low-civilization, barbarism varnished over. And this we think about Prussian civilization.

With regard to the violations of the right of the weak in former days, no one has any right to excuse himself by pointing to them. Just as little as a man of mature age excuses himself because he committed exactly the same offences as a child. There was greater knowledge and greater power in 1914 than in 1814. So there ought also to be a stronger sense of duty and more sensitive consciences. We do not usually cite now what we did in the Age of the Vikings or in the Cave Period, or in the form of apes at the animal stage, Sven Hedin.

Is it not as if we heard the echoes from this stage just now? The roar of the gorilla in the forests—does it not sound towards us from the ruins of Liège and Louvain, of Termonde and Ypres?

For the crime was, it is true, committed as soon as the wholesale invasion of a neighbour's house took place. But the culminating point was not reached. The horrors which

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cried to heaven were still to be committed. We come now to these, Mr. Explorer.

* * * * *

After the outbreak of war, every Belgian newspaper every day contained on its first page the following official exhortation to the Belgians :

The Minister of the Interior enjoins the civilian population, if the enemy appears in the district—

not to fight;

not to indulge in insults or threats;

to remain indoors and close the windows, so that it cannot be said that provocation was given;

if, in order to defend themselves, the soldiers occupy a house or a village, the inhabitants ought to leave the house or village so that it cannot be said that civilians fired.

An act of violence committed by a single civilian would be a real crime, which the law punishes with imprisonment and condemns, because it might serve as a pretext for a bloody revenge, for plundering and wholesale murder of the innocent population, of women and children.

This proclamation is a witness to the attitude of the *Belgian Government* towards a feared guerrilla war.

It ought also to be of interest to us to make the acquaintance of the *German General Staff*'s attitude and that of the German people.

The military handbook of 1902 which is used in the German Army proclaims :

"To use the necessary means for self-defence without mercy and to strike with terror is not only the right, but the duty of every officer.

"The officer must understand that war necessarily involves a certain severity, and still more, that the only true humanity often consists in absolute mercilessness."

In keeping with this an official German proclamation of August 27, 1914, says :

"The only means to *forestall* attacks by the civilian population would be to show inexorable severity and to make examples, which by their ghastliness would constitute a warning to the whole country."

The *Kölnische Zeitung* says :

"The innocent must suffer for the guilty. The burning of a village, the shooting of a hostage, the mowing down of the population of a commune which has taken up arms against advancing troops, these are not so much acts of vengeance as *warnings* to the districts not yet occupied."

We see that this newspaper opinion during

the war corresponds to German views before the war from Dr. Karl Strupp's book, *Das internationale Landkriegsgericht*, which says:

"There have been intentional and premeditated violations of international law in war, but they were merely a reaction and a *threat* in return for the outrages already committed by the enemy; they therefore seem to us, in spite of their ghastliness, as it were imposed by and in accordance with international law."

And further he says:

"The whole town is responsible for the acts of every single inhabitant."

But words are not enough: there are people who so to speak pretend wickedness, people whose lives are better than their words. The Germans do not belong to these. On its entry into Belgium, the army carried with it heaps of incendiary bombs ready for use, printed placards of protection for occasional houses which were to be spared, and for safety's sake dum-dum bullets as well.

The German soldiers likewise took with them, all complete, numerous wild stories about the exploits of francs-tireurs in the war of 1870. Their imaginations were excited by

pictures of terror. There was a good deal of nervous anxiety in the bravery of these soldiers. Every slight sound in a bush could startle one of these heroes. Every report of a rifle, which woke them from sleep, meant the act of a franc-tireur. Even the sight of "suspected civilians," who strolled about and *looked at* the German soldiers, was enough to make the German rifles go off.

They came as robbers, and they expected to be received as robbers are received.

Their expectation was of course rewarded. Soon enough, the very first days after the violation of peace, it was asserted that francs-tireurs had been at work. Suddenly, on a dark night or in the middle of the day, the reports of rifles had been heard, which must have come from the windows in the town where they were encamped. One of the civilian inhabitants had fired at the Imperial Army. A man or woman or a child had fired at some one in a force of several hundred, several thousand warriors, grown-up, strong fellows, armed to the teeth.

Result: perhaps a flesh wound, perhaps a

sudden death for one of these heroes; but for the village or town?

No inquiry, consequently no trial, merely a simple and inexorable order. So and so many scores, hundreds of civilians are picked out, drawn up, and shot. A few houses are set on fire—the incendiary bombs are of use. Nothing can equal foresight. Sometimes even this is not enough. The whole population is outlawed. Doors are broken in, windows smashed, and everything alive is driven out, from the old man in the wheel chair to the child in the cradle—out, out and away! Their departure is hastened by means of the bayonet and the butt-end of the rifle. Here and there some refractory or dilatory person is struck or shot down. Out, out and away—miles distant from home, out towards the fire of rifle and cannon. Such a defenceless, weeping, shouting civilian crowd is an excellent shield against the regular troops they meet. Some one grows weary, hesitates—a blow with the rifle-butt, a bayonet-thrust, into the ditch with him or her! All the quicker comes the fate of the remainder. Belgian bullets fall: it is impossible to distinguish countrymen and

enemy. And far behind the fire roars, the wind sweeps a smell of burning and flakes of soot over the homeless, whilst the clamorous soldiers march in step in the dust of the road.

This is war, you say; yes, this seems to be war. Let us not discuss war with the Germans and their military handbook. Of course, the Germans understand war better. For several hundred years they have been experts of matters in this kind. But we two, Sven Hedin, you and I, who are not Germans, can we not discuss—like human beings, like Swedes? Do you remember the story of the war of Gustavus Adolphus, that part of the war in Germany which was led by the great King in person? You remember —to anticipate your objection—Frankfort on the Oder and the terrible way in which it was taken by storm. True, but Frankfort was defended by a hostile army, supported by the citizens. When the city was stormed, the victorious soldiers, and in part the officers as well, had an excuse in the resistance which had angered them. And this occasion was almost the only one. The King was so scrupulous

about discipline that no "civilian" was allowed to be harmed, unless he was found as an armed enemy. Nor did the population in Germany avoid the victorious Swedish army. They thronged together to bless the King and his people. They rang the bells, sang the *Te Deum,* strewed flowers as the army passed. . . . And yet it was a powerful army —an army which *for its time* won more important victories than Kaiser Wilhelm's soldiers have hitherto won.

So this was war in the time of Gustavus Adolphus, an age which was barbarous in comparison with ours. And such as I have just painted it—in mild colours—is war to-day, where that civilized people the Germans pass! Is it necessary that war should be like this *at present*? Is it reasonable? Is it prudent—from a sober military and political point of view?

A shot is fired in the darkness of night. Must a force of brave warriors be seized with panic on that account? Is there no manly courage; did they not march out with a fairly certain risk before their eyes? Can they not look danger in the face coolly

and calmly? A shot is fired: let us then find out where it was fired and who shot! If the guilty one is discovered, reasonable compensation must be demanded from the town or village. But is it reasonable compensation that twenty, fifty, or a thousand innocent people should directly or indirectly have capital punishment inflicted on them or lose their livelihood, because *one* guilty person exists amongst them? And is it prudent? People are frightened in other towns or villages. Frightened into what? Into prudence with firearms, into submission. The whole country is paralysed with fear. It is compelled to bow to the will of the conqueror. Well, and afterwards?

There is always an afterwards which extends beyond the end of one's nose. The people are frightened, but into hatred, into ineradicable hatred, which sooner or later will seek revenge. War is transformed from that adjustment between economic factors, between Governments, diplomats, banks, and upper classes, which the broad masses everywhere see in war, into a war between peoples, races—between individuals, human beings. It becomes a

hatred which will never be extinguished, this between the Walloon whose mother was killed, and the German who killed the Walloon's mother And every Walloon will be that particular Walloon, every German for many generations to come that particular German. Such hatred will render difficult much desirable co-operation, such hatred will place secret hindrances in the way of many German calculations, such hatred will make the German a solitary in a world allied against him.

For the German, power is everything, but no one is always powerful. There comes an hour when one must appeal to good will. Where is now good will towards Germany? In Sweden, amongst a crowd of thoughtless tradesmen and pugnacious officers? And in you, Sven Hedin! But neither you nor Sweden will decide the future of Germany. That future will be decided by Germany herself, through her imprudent policy and still more imprudent warfare.

All chivalrousness seems to have vanished from German warfare. All admiration for the patriotism of the enemy has disappeared from the nation, whose only idea, whose only

virtue, is patriotism. Could they not understand the feelings of a foolish franc-tireur, the feelings of a desperate patriot, who imagines he is performing an heroic act when he, alone armed in an unarmed village, aims at one of these enemies who have attacked his native land? Could they not honour him in death, or at least refrain from ill-treating and insulting him and his countrymen? In Germany they honour William Tell, who killed a foreign bailiff from an ambush. They honour Hermann the Cheruskian, who by cunning and perfidy enticed a Roman army into a trap, and with his superior forces of wild forest-dwellers killed his enemies in a fight without any bravery, by hurling stones and spears and by overthrowing trees. They honour Andreas Hofer, the innkeeper, who was shot by the French after a long guerrilla war. But they execute a whole population; they insult, ill-treat, mutilate, torture, murder, burn, devastate, plunder hundreds and thousands of people or homes, because—*one* franc-tireur is said to have fired a shot, which perhaps did not even hit any one!

And now a question: a shot has been heard,

but how do we know that any one fired? A rifle can go off by accident, even without anybody touching it. Just such an episode is told about a small Belgian town, which had been blessed with two different sets of troops quartered on it. The troops which were the last to march in have just been found rooms, when a shot is heard, and in a minute there is firing going on to right and to left, until the soldiers come rushing out and fire at one another across the street. They are two different regiments with different uniforms, and, still half-asleep, each takes the other for an enemy. For once the matter is properly cleared up. The *rifle of a German soldier*, who had forgotten to put the safety-catch over, has *gone off*, through some imprudence, and the report has scared the soldiers out of their dreams of franc-tireurs.

May not something like this have happened in other, in most, in all cases, where there was talk of francs-tireurs? "Not at all," you reply, always solicitous about your ideals; "it has been established by witnesses that shots were fired from the windows of civilians. And moreover, in the early days of the

war, Belgian newspapers confessed that there had been francs-tireurs. It has even been established that these francs-tireurs were mostly Belgian priests, who had become so fanatical on account of the war as to forget their charitable task."

Well, Sven Hedin, the strange thing is that the Germans have not named a single one of these witnesses, nor a single one of these francs-tireurs, and that just the Germans have zealously denied the statement about the Belgian priests.

"But His Majesty the Kaiser," you say, full of veneration, "himself referred to the Belgian priests in his telegram to Wilson. Similarly His Highness Prince Heinrich XXXIII of Reuss telegraphed that priests and others had gouged out the eyes of wounded Germans —horrible, is it not?—horrible!"

Ah yes, it would indeed be horrible, if it were true. But just about these reports with regard to priests, one of Kaiser Wilhelm's generals, von Linde-Suden, the commander of the 10th Army Corps, declares on September 29, 1914, that "these reports are derived from sources which do not deserve to be believed," and that he, the General,

"will punish severely the authors and disseminators (!) of this slander, whether it takes place by word of mouth, in writing, or by pictures." He "will also hold the Press responsible, if it participates in spreading these reports."

Let us console ourselves: the General will not punish either Emperors or Princes. The persons in question probably themselves discovered their blunder in time. Scarcely ten days after Kaiser Wilhelm's excellent telegram the German General Staff ordered the commanders of army corps to "intervene energetically against these general reports, which must give offence to a large part of the German population."

That there had been alarm in the camp in Germany we can see from the many protests by priests in that country. A Catholic Propaganda Society, *Pax*, systematically scrutinized and refuted through its "information bureau" all reports, both those of a general character and those of particular cases, which had been localized. *Pax* applied to editors of papers and to military authorities, and not in a single case did it obtain confirmation

of the statements about clerical francs-tireurs. The military commanders in particular denied them emphatically. In a number of cases, priests who were stated to have been shot as francs-tireurs were still alive and at large. In some cases, the places which had been indicated as the scene of the incident did not exist. Father Duhr, a German, collected numerous refuted accusations in a book, *Der Lügengeist* (*The Spirit of Lying*). The Belgian priests seem therefore—in spite of the assurances of Kaiser Wilhelm and Heinrich XXXIII—to have been perfectly innocent. We mentioned also a short time ago that before the war the Belgian clergy were predominantly Germanophile.

If this charge is removed from the face of the earth, there still remain in any case the stories about francs-tireurs who were not priests. And these stories are said to be supported by the Belgian Press itself. This Press was, like all others in the early days of the war, so to speak in a dark room. It could not examine what was really happening. So it might well be that some paper gave information which was misleading

or was misinterpreted. The Germans probably confused these statements with information about the Belgian territorials, whose simple uniform might also lead to their being taken for civilians.

In Germany's White Book there are statistics of deeds committed by francs-tireurs. It is characteristic of these statistics that each case is seldom corroborated by more than *one* witness, that the victims are nameless, and that the evidence was given on the average two, often as long as seven, months after the event. How much confidence can one have in such material? Numerous cases are directly proved to be wrong; for the others there was only *one* positive but very vague assertion.

The whole story of the francs-tireurs in Belgium seems to be a legend, a conscious or unconscious biassed lie, which is more suited for trashy contemporary German novels than for contemporary reality. The Belgians were a peaceable and industrious people, whose heavy lot at this hour ought not to be aggravated by untruths. Spitteler, the Swiss author of German extraction, is right when he finds it a lack of taste for Germany not to be

satisfied with murdering Belgium but to abuse the body as well. Typical of German ravings about francs-tireurs is a portrait which was reproduced not long ago; it was supposed to represent a female franc-tireur. However, just the same portrait had been reproduced in 1870—and probably belonged to the world of the imagination even then.

Another lie is the talk about eyes being gouged out, ears cut off, prisoners or wounded ill-treated, for which the Belgians have been blamed. On inquiries being made in German hospitals, barracks, ambulances, military commands, the same tendentious lie proved to correspond to nothing in reality. The Belgians, both civilians and military, have proved perfectly innocent of what was laid to their charge.

Belgium's guilt in this as in other respects is fictitious, invented to excuse in some measure the criminal. One can, however, explain the crime without it being necessary to slander those attacked. All Germany's longings for the last fifty or a hundred years ran in the Prussian, that is, in a warlike direction. German State organization, German diplomacy, German education, all aimed at preparing what has now

happened. German military writers, jurists, historians, pedagogues, poets—especially those recognized in high places—all impressed on their people the sole duty of increasing the territory and external power of their country. "A place in the sun, a future on the sea," so ran the latest catchwords, those which inflamed the people and crowned everything. Leading circles inculcated that for this end all means were sacred. A military handbook like that of the Germans is a guide to terrorism. And much of the literature, of the education in the widest sense, which was given the German people was merely an extension of the military handbook. What was written in books and newspapers, was displayed on the stage and taught from the desk of the pedagogue, aimed at making the people inwardly slavish and outwardly ruthless. Towards authority bestial submissiveness, towards the stranger bestial lack of manners—so, at any rate, the ideal of discipline displays itself in practice, so that it may now be said that "es ist erreicht." [1]

* * * * *

One must harden one's heart, you write, when one travels through Belgium. Every step shows

[1] "It is achieved."—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

the misfortune of having lost one's liberty in one's own country. And one dreams with anxiety of what one would feel in a similar case.

I quote from memory; it is possible that the expressions are somewhat different. But I understand your depression, Sven Hedin, as you hasten on in the Imperial motor-car through the country which has been devastated by your friends of greater or lesser rank. You feel something like disgust, you wish perhaps for a moment that you had not sat in the motor-car of the devastators and beside one of them.

The next moment you "harden your heart." You are the friend of the Kaiser, your companion in the motor-car is a refined, an attractive, an extraordinary man. Neither he nor his class—nor his people—can be essentially guilty of all this misery. The Germans came in their friendliest mood, they extended the hand of friendship to a country which is half Germanic. Instead of the handshake of the Fleming they were met by the hate of the Walloon, and these passionate, venomous Kelts aroused the wrath of the good-natured Teuton. What the Germans may have done, they did only out of necessity. And guilt and punishment have always stood in relation to

each other. No excesses were committed—that is, on the part of the Germans; German discipline and German sense of order are a guarantee for this. The word of your friend the Kaiser and the veracity of your acquaintances are also a guarantee.

You harden your heart—but your Imperial motor-car rushes past never-ending ruins of homes, villages, towns. It rushes past graves and cemeteries, past these innumerable crosses with which Germany has decorated heroic Belgium. Then there is a struggle in your heart which you are trying to harden. It is of course mere curiosity which inquires of your companion:

"Did francs-tireurs live everywhere in these homes which are now ruins?"

"In a way," replies your polite cicerone, "for the commune must do penance for the individual. When in a village of a hundred houses there was a single franc-tireur in a single house, we threw our incendiary bombs and poured paraffin into all the hundred houses."

You bow and smile—an uncomprehending smile, I hope. But after a while you are again curious:

"This is a whole churchyard," you say; "were they who now moulder here all francs-tireurs?"

"In a way," replies your cicerone; "when *one* of them fired a shot, without our discovering who it was, we took it for granted that they had all fired the shot—or might have fired it—or in future might fire shots at us, so for safety's sake, for prudence' sake—one can never be *too* prudent—we punished them all as francs-tireurs."

"Of course, of course," you say, still smiling.

You are, however, somewhat depressed as you sit there. With anxiety you think that some one in the neighbourhood might take it into his head to fire a shot, for which you might be blamed. So with a certain relief you hasten through a silent, ruined village, all blackened with smoke, where you search in vain for the usual German crosses of honour.

"In this village," you say with joyful surprise, "you have tempered justice with mercy. Or were there no francs-tireurs here?"

"There were doubtless some," says your German friend, "although I know nothing of this little hole. Probably we buried them a little to one side, or also—that is possible—we sent the crowd to Germany."

"To Germany!" you say, quite touched; "is

that to be called a punishment? I think it is altogether too great an honour."

"Indeed, I think so too," says the German, "but it is these mawkish English ideas we have not got rid of yet. The English pretend to respect even their enemies. They saved *our* sailors in the battle of Heligoland, and they sent a wreath to *our* best aviator's grave. I call that mawkish, decadent, out of date, unmilitary, civilian—the English of course call it chivalrous!"

Somewhere in your heart you feel a sudden pain, for you are yourself a knight and a nobleman, and you remember that you too in Sweden have learnt a little about the virtue of chivalrousness. But you harden your heart and nod acquiescence.

"The English are a degenerate race," you say; "there is only *one* soldier, and consequently only *one* great man in England—Lord Kitchener, whose guest I was," etc.

"Kitchener, that bloodhound!" your polite companion interrupts, and somewhat surprised, you remain silent. You find that you have been guilty of a slip of the tongue. One ought never to praise an Englishman in the presence of a German.

Here you will put your veto on my account.

"Not a line of all you impute to me, with the exception of the introductory words, stands in my books."

"No," I reply, "but in your books there stands in reality frightfully little. If one wants to get anything out of them, one must know the art of reading *between* the lines."

Now we come at once to what stands in them.

You hasten further in the Imperial motor-car. You have been silent for a long time—three entire minutes—whilst you fought against your heart, and at the same time your naïve doubts, as to *whether* all those buried here really deserved the not very glorious death of a franc-tireur.

"I presume," you say, "that the victims—that the criminals were tried before——"

"Before? What do you imagine," interrupts your companion, "when we were in such a hurry? We had to get to Paris to fight against Czarism. How should we have managed to try and pass sentence on thousands of persons? You surely do not imagine that the pettifogging lawyers of Berlin came with us here?"

You sigh without immediately being able to assent. So the German has time to meditate.

"It is obvious that everything was carefully gone

into," he says ; " we had heaps of witnesses. No one had time to give evidence at once, but one, three, four, five or seven months afterwards, they could always get leave for that trifle."

You are still silent ; you are a Swede, and consequently a born jurist, and you find—in spite of all your efforts—that this evidence many months afterwards is not very reassuring.

Your silence is somewhat embarrassing ; you are not known as a taciturn man. You speak on the average 2,000 printed pages a month—besides all you chatter at meal-times. So the German, more and more uneasy, continues :

" Moreover, you can easily be present at a trial here in Belgium. Francs-tireurs will soon be caught red-handed again, and I will arrange——"

Now the German suddenly grows silent. You too are silent. Only the throbbing of the motor. In silence you hasten through a silent land, quiet and still as death. You ponder perhaps over the blessings of German civilization for those who are not Germans.

A few days afterwards you are really allowed to be present at a trial of francs-tireurs, quite alive, and who—who—who, after a regular, abso-

lutely Teutonic trial—are *acquitted*! So there are perfectly innocent francs-tireurs—that appears, when they are tried on being caught red-handed instead of seven months after their execution!

The episode of the innocent francs-tireurs—as you relate it—did not, however, give rise to any irreverent reflections on your part. Your faith is too firm in that model nation, the Germans. And you have, it seems, succeeded only too well in your resolve to harden your heart.

However, you drive on in your Imperial motor-car and arrive at the severely and justly punished town of Löwen—by the population wrongly called Louvain, or, if you are a Fleming, Leuven.

You find, however, that the "severe" punishment was quite mild. You drive some way before you come to the first ruins. So all Louvain is certainly not destroyed by the bombardment, as one had imagined. Scarcely a fifth of the town is destroyed. It is true that in this fifth—you confess it frankly and unreservedly—several precious and irreplaceable buildings are included. In the midst of these ruins rises, however, like a cliff out of the sea, the proud gem from the period of 1450 or so with its six slender, open-work towers. You made a tour round the Town

Hall and—*with all the good will in the world* —you could not find any damage done to these walls, ornamented with extravagant richness. Perhaps there is somewhere a scratch made by a shell, which escaped your attention. Thanks to the accurate fire of the German artillery, not a single moulding of the six towers has been damaged. The cause of the bombardment of Louvain is well known. The civilian population fired from the windows at the German troops on their entering the town, and as the crime could not be punished in any other way, the houses were set on fire by a bombardment. When the German soldiers afterwards tried to extinguish the fire in the houses lying nearest to the Town Hall, francs-tireurs again attacked them with their carbines. Any other army than the German would have acted in the same way, and the Germans deeply regretted that they were compelled against their will to adopt such means

That is how you write and, of course, you believe what you write. On their entry into the town the poor Germans were ill received by the citizens, and this *crime* had to be punished by the burning of a library and some other houses. There was no other way of punishing the town

for the *crime* of shooting at German soldiers. One understands so well the Germans' own self-esteem when one reads your words about the great crime. After all, you are not a German by birth, you are not a genuine Teuton of unadulterated purity, and yet you too consider it a *crime* to shoot at German soldiers who invade one's home. But it is not a crime on the part of these soldiers to invade the countries of others, and on the least resistance to bombard a beautiful town, at the risk of laying in ruins irreplaceable buildings as well—in spite of the accurate aim of the German artillery. Not to mention the irreplaceable human lives: but about them, curiously enough, you, the aristocrat and the individualist, never speak.

Civilians fired at soldiers—how appalling! Civilians, these lower beings, dared to raise their "carbines" against the Prussian supermen in uniform! The Hague Congress, you say, filled with indignation, has in the civilians' own interest forbidden the participation of the civilian population in the professional work of the professional soldier. The civilian population is no doubt grateful for this decision of the Hague Congress, but the Hague Congress was probably unaware of the civilization of the Germans—otherwise the Con-

gress would have taken good care to provide a suitable penalty for infringements of the decisions of the Congress. It is quite certain that the Congress would never have decided to punish the University Library because some civilian had fired in an entirely different street. The Congress would have invented some means of punishing the guilty civilians without needing to use violence against the innocent buildings and the innocent books! What do you say, Dr. Sven Hedin? Is it really possible that in your eyes also the bones of a Pomeranian invader are worth more than the collected treasures of wisdom, genius, and patience of many centuries? And could not the accurate fire of the German artillery have struck the guilty house instead of the many which were not guilty? Or would the fire of the German artillery not have been so accurate as this? It is regrettable. For it was the extraordinary von Kluck—who was afterwards defeated by the French on the Marne—who aimed this accurate artillery. Or perhaps we must blame his subordinate, General von Manteuffel?

But what is the good of lamentations? The damage cannot be undone in this way. The fact remains: when the Germans entered Louvain they

were fired at from the houses by civilian wretches —who would have been honest people if they had only had a coloured or gilded rag on their bodies—and *consequently* nothing remained for the brave Germans, who did not dare to stay in such a dangerous town, but to hasten out and bombard it from a distance, as a punishment to the library and a warning to all other libraries. Now, there is only one little circumstance which causes surprise. The Germans, who have otherwise always been in a hurry during this war, allowed themselves on this occasion a little time for reflection before they proceeded to carry out the punishment. This punishment cannot at any rate be excused by precipitancy. For the Germans, under the command of General von Manteuffel, belonging to the army of General von Kluck, marched into Louvain at noon on August 19th, and the "bombardment" took place at eight o'clock on the evening of August 25th. What dilatory heroes! Is it on account of this delay that General von Kluck was at last, at the end of 1916, given his discharge for the sake of his health? Another delay—this time on the part of the General Staff or the Highest Commander! What are we to think about the

Germans, Sven Hedin? And about their Army Commanders?

Or was it the francs-tireurs who were dilatory? Did they plan suitable (or unsuitable) steps and measures for six and a half days, and only on the evening of the seventh day begin to fire at the German troops, who were encamped and feasting in the town? Let him believe it who can, but very strong faith or great simplicity are undeniably necessary to do so. Probably they were not so accurate about dates when they told you the wonderful story, and to doubt a German statement—even if it resembled a fairy-tale—lay beyond your powers.

And there is one other little trifle, Herr Doktor. That is the very question of the bombardment and the accurate fire of the German artillery. The Germans are, as is well known, a modest people. Boasting is not in their nature. So it does not seem at all strange, at any rate not to you, that the first reports about the destruction of Louvain do not mention this bombardment at all. There is talk of a fire, which on account of the storm then prevailing spread further than had been intended. It is confessed that Louvain has been destroyed, but not that the town has

been bombarded by artillery. And, in fact, an investigation of the Eglise Saint-Pierre, for instance, shows that it was set on fire in all tranquillity and with calm premeditation, and not at all by a bombardment. In this church every chapel was set on fire separately, and as many as twenty-one places where the fire started can be counted *inside* the building. The other buildings were set ablaze in the same way. It is no use trying to blame the storm. On August 25th there was a light breeze, with a velocity of between five and nine and a half miles an hour.

And very little reflection is needed to convince one that when so practical a people as the Germans can achieve their purpose with incendiary bombs, which probably do not cost many pfennigs, they will not have recourse to their artillery, whose ammunition is so expensive. A single shot of the celebrated howitzers means a fortune. And it would really be too much expense and honour for an evacuated and defenceless town. Indeed, all recent inquiries agree that Louvain was not bombarded at all. The Germans have therefore got their name cleared of a great piece of folly—even if their artillery must renounce the honour of missing the beautiful Town Hall.

Of course, a certain obscurity prevails in these matters. Probably it will never be fully cleared up how things happened at Louvain on the night of August 25, 1914, and the following day. In any case the German troops and the other representatives of German civilization must first be removed before truth can speak uncensured. However, so much we know even now, that Louvain was not bombarded, but fell a victim to deliberate arson. And the German incendiaries had been quartered in the town six days and a half and five nights before they found cause to set the town on fire.

What, then, was the cause? If we may judge by the course of events at other places in Belgium under the model German organization, what took place at Louvain was something like this.

The German soldiers, who have entered the town without encountering the least resistance, and who have everywhere seen empty streets, doorways, windows, have after the first triumph begun to find it monotonous. They have begun to "requisition," that is to seize, all stocks of wine and spirits. They have drunk until they are helpless or wildly excited, and then their soldier's instincts

have wakened. There had been no pretext for these instincts in the dead-quiet town. They reel out into the streets and seek whom they may devour. Everywhere at doors and windows more or less intoxicated warriors are lolling. One of them fires a shot in jest at his comrades in the street. They reply. Soon there is firing everywhere in the town, which just now was so peaceful. Here and there a civilian casts a frightened glance through a window and is greeted by an attentive bullet. Soon there is no longer a whole pane in the principal streets. Nothing but peals and crashes and clamour and disorder.

Now half-intoxicated officers come rushing out.

"What is the matter, you scoundrels?"

"They are firing from the windows, Herr Leutnant!"

"Are they firing? These civilians! These francs-tireurs! They shall be punished as an example! They shall see that the German soldier is not to be played with. Out with the rascals! Bring out the incendiary bombs! The town shall be destroyed! *Delenda est Carthago!* Quick march!"

The soldiers demand nothing better. Then the

massacre of pedestrians at the railway-station and elsewhere takes place. The inhabitants are driven out of their houses, out of the town. Some are executed at once, are ordered to lay themselves flat on the ground, receive their shot in the neck and are buried, according to orders, in the neighbourhood of the place of execution of their "accomplices" (the Belgians). Along the streets there pours a terrified crowd of people, driven by rifle-butts and bayonets. . . . Now Louvain is deserted. Now the incendiary bombs and inflammable materials are brought to places which had long before been chosen by the far-sighted and model German organization. The town is burning. . . .

Then one of the higher officers happens to think of the art treasures of the town. Oh dear, the civilians all the world over might take offence! It is not a matter of indifference what those art-maniacs, the Americans, may say! Or what the Pope may say! Forward, we must extinguish and save—we must at least pretend that after all we tried to extinguish the fire when the town had received its just punishment.

If we only succeed in saving the Town Hall, for instance, we can always disarm irresponsible

witnesses by pointing out that nothing valuable had been really destroyed.

Nay, dear Sven Hedin, you must not say that I am romancing. On the contrary, I have avoided all sensational details. These you can find already in thousands of authentic publications. You can find them in German and in neutral accounts. In German newspapers and soldiers' letters. In Dutch papers like *De Tyd*. In the narratives of neutrals, as, for example, the letter of Manuel Gamarra, a South American priest, to the Belgian Minister at Buenos Aires, published in the *Corriere de la Plata* and in *Argentina* on March 4, 1915.

But why cite witnesses against you and the Germans? You only believe the assurances of German Court circles. And the evidence of your own eyes. That the latter are not above all criticism you do not perceive. You have travelled in an Imperial motor-car through a country occupied by your friends and those of the same opinions as yourself. You have travelled just where it seemed befitting to your friends the Germans. You have been allowed to see as much as the Empress Catharine was allowed to see of the country devastated by her friend, the conqueror

of the Crimea. You have been allowed to see the scenery of Potemkin.[1] And with a faith in them as firm as the rock, you have written your defence of the most infamous deed which has been done since the first date in history.

A fifth of Louvain has been destroyed—not more! You have probably travelled with the same skill and looked about you with the same sharp eyes as the drawer of the map in the *Kriegszeitung*. This cartographer marks as *undestroyed* that quarter of the town which had never been *built on*. In this way the proportions are very considerably altered. The skilful cartographer has also intervened in another way. Burnt quarters are given on his map as uninjured. Thus, for instance, the *Vieux Marché*, where now only the *Collège des Joséphites* and a few neighbouring houses remain. Presumably Dr. Hedin's motor tour really took place on the map.

It is a curious conception of your scholarliness that one gets from such specimens of your studies. An explorer, who of his own free will lets himself be taken in, who swears to falsifications blind-

[1] An allusion to the Finnish poet Runeberg's *Nadeschda*, in which Prince Potemkin had a village put up temporarily on the Volga in order to please the Empress Catharine. On her arrival she insisted on inspecting the village, and then discovered that it was only paint and canvas.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

fold, and who accepts mere biassed lies as genuine observations simply because the source appears to him personally sympathetic! Are your explorations in Transhimalaya equally trustworthy? Books like the latest from the "fronts" would really do more credit to Dr. Cook than to Dr. Hedin!

* * * * *

You have expressly confessed that you had to "harden your heart" in the presence of all the misery in Belgium. So you must have seen a good deal more than you will confide to us. I will not complete your account with more bloody and horrible details of the slaughter of men themselves. You have hardened your heart in more places than in Belgium, and I shall have an opportunity to confront you with human misery further on also.

But in the chapter on Belgium I will above all confront you with the *destruction*. The conception of Belgium is so identical with the conception of civilization, that just this point of view makes itself felt even more than the actual slaughter. What the Germans have destroyed in Belgium is irreplaceable to an extent which only future ages will be able to comprehend. The

Germans themselves certainly do not comprehend it. They are in a striking measure an unæsthetic people, whose interest in art has always been that of the disciple and the theoretician rather than that of the creative artist, and only an artist can fully appreciate artistic values. No doubt, Sven Hedin, your interest in art is likewise merely that of a scientist. In your eyes a brutal and ignorant uniformed slaughterer of men stands for more than an artistic building or an irreplaceable detail in this building. Consequently you still live in the happy belief—with which the Germans have inspired you—that Louvain and Belgium, all the destroyed towns of Belgium, have not suffered any damage worth mentioning. They can easily be repaired. They can be restored, re-erected in greater splendour, with a purer style than they ever had. Victor Hugo and his echoes in Sweden could, it is true, tell you something about "restorations," but I do not suppose you read Victor Hugo. A German professor of architecture is of course a greater authority in the sphere of architecture than he is.

But *if*—I only say *if*—well, *if* you some day have your eyes opened to what the Germans—quite apart from the breach of neutrality, massacre,

and oppression—have done in Belgium, *if* you receive the *gift* of understanding what they have done since their wholesale burglary of the Jeweller's Shop of Europe, well, just read an old tale by Hans Christian Andersen! In Swedish it is called *The Most Incredible*, but the title of the original says more. *Det vidunderligste* means *The Most Tremendous, The Most Marvellous.*

If you have not read it, here is a summary: "He who could perform 'The Most Marvellous' was to have the king's daughter and half the kingdom. The young men, nay, the old also, strained every thought, sinew, and muscle; two ate themselves to death and one drank himself into the same state. . . . Little guttersnipes practised spitting on their own backs. . . .

"But 'The Most Marvellous' was a large clock in a case, curiously contrived both outside and in. Whenever the clock struck, out came living images which showed what hour it had struck; there were no less than twelve scenes with movable figures and singing and speaking."

Andersen describes the details of "The Most Marvellous" for several pages, as only he could. All were agreed as to who ought to have the prize.

Nothing more marvellous than this ingenious, gigantic work of art could be imagined or contrived.

But—wait!

The most marvellous, the most tremendous, was as yet not done. A tall, strong fellow with coarse limbs undertook to do it. "He swung a big axe into the work of art. Crash, smash, there it all lay. Wheels and springs flew all round, everything was destroyed.

"'To destroy such a work of art,' said the judges, 'well, that was The Most Marvellous!'

"All the people said the same, and so the man was to have the princess and half the kingdom. . . ."

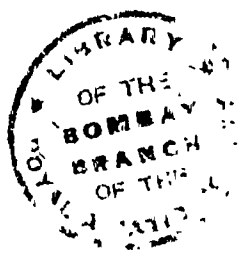
But Andersen is merciful, not least towards the princess. He lets the marvellous work of art rise up again, created anew—not by the destroyer, however, but by its original creator. Only he who had constructed could reconstruct.

Well, this is a fairy-tale, but we all recognize now the truth in this tale. We all know who was the artist and had the genius, and who only had the axe and was a barbarian.

Perhaps Belgium will some day rise up again. Only Belgium can perform the great

deed, and once more produce "The Most Marvellous."

As far as Germany is concerned, she has hitherto only produced in Belgium what is repulsive beyond all description. All her professors will not be able to make good the damage. As the Germans now manifest themselves in word and deed, they are only capable of the monstrous, which can only be done by monsters.



CHAPTER XI

HEDIN'S ACCOUNT OF ARMENIA

"A JOURNEY through Turkey in Asia during the summer of the war-year 1916 meant a chain of most remarkable experiences. One seemed to see the seething unrest of the world-war against the background of the profound peace which prevailed over the fields of ruins at Babylon and Nineveh; and in comparison with the immense expeditions which started from the kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon, and in comparison with Alexander's expedition to India, the world-war seemed to shrink to an episode in the history of the world."

This is your introduction to an article, *A Few Impressions of Turkey in Asia,* published in a Swedish periodical immediately after your return from your tour in Turkey. The introduction is typical, is it not? This is the kind of Swedish which confers the right to a seat in the Swedish

Academy. And this is the kind of logic which characterizes you and your compeers when you try to be romantic.

My extract is not made at random. Such blunders as in this example abound wherever one opens your books. I might well wait until you had managed to publish the book on Turkey which you have announced. But I cannot be guided by when you have time; I must have an eye to when I myself have time. And I do not suppose I shall do you any injustice. I have waded through your many-leagued desert-production, and am certain that the leagues which remain will reveal the same cheerless plains of sand round only too few oases. Your book on Turkey will resemble your book on Belgium, and surpass your article on Turkey only by the number of pages.

It would be tempting to reprint the whole article. It is an absolute classic, in the same sense as a piece of composition can be. But I must think of my publisher, and of yours too, of course. I shall content myself with some extracts here and there, and with a few remarks by way of comment.

Further on in your article you continue thus

"Round the Holy Sepulchre, in whose chambers the body of the Son of Man was committed to earthly rest, there now marched at times Turkish soldiers, singing on their way to some distant front." "From the heights of Nazareth the hospital of the Red Crescent gazed down over a district where the Child Jesus so often wandered at his mother's hand to the well, which to-day still bears Her name, and at Jaffa Simon the tanner's house was threatened by the fire from the cannon of French torpedo-boats."

In what follows I have not traced even a tremor of the voice which might indicate indignation at the Turkish clamour of war round the cradle of Christianity. The Christian nobleman, who simulated piety at the strait-laced German and Swedish Courts, has not a word of disapprobation when the horses of the Turks trample round the grave of Christ. He has no objection to the Crescent ruling where the Cross once was placed. The only bitterness he displays towards the desecrators of sacred places is that which turns against the *French* cannon when they threaten "Simon the tanner's house."

You are indeed a Christian and an Occidental in all his glory. If you represented Christianity

and the Occident in a deeper sense, one might be tempted to admit you were right in preferring the Orient and the Turks. They at any rate do not simulate Christianity.

You are just as accurate as usual in your statements. And when you proclaim a little further on that Halil Pasha "captured with 2,500 Turks Kut-el-Amara with its English garrison of 13,400 men, of whom 4,000 were Englishmen," we must presumably wait for the figures of the other side. The Turks are not famous either for veracity or statistical accuracy. And from the chapter on Belgium we know how much we can rely on your own truthfulness and critical prudence.

In the next line you write: "The commander, General Townshend, was one of my friends in India; he was Lord Kitchener's next in command at the time when I was the guest of the British Empire's greatest son in our days. Now we met at the table of Halil Pasha, where the victor drank to the health of the vanquished in foaming champagne."

So there you sat, Sven Hedin, and in foaming champagne drank to the health of the vanquished, for we may well suppose that *you* did not sit alone and feel thirsty. It undeniably sounds more

probable that you drank the health of the victor. In any case the situation was typical. You would presumably have also drunk to the health of the vanquished—or the victor—in the case of a victory by a cannibal tribe under German protection in darkest Africa, provided that the vanquished belonged to a liberal-minded and progressive nation.

You do not blush to recall the time when you "were the guest of the British Empire's greatest son," and you call the defeated Townshend—the prisoner of the savages whom you prefer to Englishmen—"one of my friends in India." Your coolness is really wonderful. You do not say what General Townshend replied to your toast, or if he recognized in the least one of "his friends in India." But what you have to say about him and your other "friends" is in reality of interest only as a contribution to your psychology. As a chronicler you seem to me afterwards really too Oriental.

Further on you say:

"It was not to render a service to Germany and the other Central Powers that Turkey sided with them. It was done exclusively in her own interest. The Ottoman patriots had no other

thought, no other aim, than to serve and save their own country."

To judge by these words then, it is not above all Turkey's position as a vassal of Germany which makes her so dear to you. It is the struggle of Turkey itself which enraptures and gladdens you. You share the hatred of the Turks for Europe, and it is Europe, as represented by her most typical peoples, the French and English, that you wish to see humiliated in the face of Asiatics.

Had Turkey not abandoned her neutrality, you say, her hour would now have struck. Russian influence would have spread over Asia Minor, French influence over Syria and Palestine, and English influence over Irak and Mesopotamia. And according to you, this would be a horrible misfortune.

You say with regard to the probable treatment of Turkey by the Entente: "They would no doubt, like the snake-charmer, have played long enough on the flute *to tame the cobra*, they would have promised commercial gains, food, and gold, and in return have demanded transit by land and water. They would, Heaven knows by what means, have sought to awaken and fan internal

dissension in Turkey, and with resounding promises have egged on political parties against one another."

This is a horrible future you prophesied for this country, which before was so happy and so united. Curious, however, that you should compare it to a cobra. But in your opinion a creature is the more admirable the more fearful it is. In view of your expressions of enthusiasm one is often reminded of the Asiatic and African tribes who worshipped the devil as a god. However, I must tell you that this trait in your character is absolutely un-Swedish, and at bottom un-Germanic also. Not to mention that it is un-European and uncivilized, but this argument probably makes little impression on a man of your singular leanings.

You rejoice with an entirely childlike ardour and sincerity at Turkey's "fight for freedom," at its "material for soldiers," at "the leading men," an Enver Pasha, an Izzet, a Wehib, a Djemal Pasha, at the great victors of Kut-el-Amara and the Dardanelles. "There was plenty of cattle, sheep, grain, and fruit," you say, "and the distribution of food was organized by the iron hand and tried wisdom of Djemal Pasha." "In

Syria and Palestine rules the powerful and talented Djemal Pasha, one of the most interesting and attractive persons I have ever met. In his army, the Fourth, he maintains strict discipline, and he sways his sceptre over his provinces with the power of an absolute ruler. From him there is no appeal; as Naval Minister he is himself a member of the Government, and at his side is usually seen an adjutant in the white summer uniform of the Turkish Navy."

This panegyric reminds me of schooldays now long past. Little boys in the first form, who belonged to the wealthier middle classes, used to edify their less well-situated fellows with descriptions of society in this style. Everything in the circle of their parents was so splendid and powerful and uniformed and extraordinary that the like simply did not exist. But my little schoolfellows —unlike you—have long since grown out of this childish tendency to boast about their remarkable acquaintances. Just those who are well-bred know that such things are not quite gentlemanly. If we must praise a person, it ought preferably not to be in connection with the dinner where we ourselves drank to his health, nor in connection with the praise we ourselves received from him.

And we ought also to be on our guard lest our enthusiasm should cast ridicule upon him. Others, who do not see him with the eyes of the eulogist, demand concrete reasons and guarantees for the justification of the praise.

Such reasons and guarantees you can certainly not give—either in this or in other cases. You will never succeed in convincing a single person that Queen Sophia of Sweden was in her day "the most remarkable woman in Europe." You will never be able to prove that Kaiser Wilhelm II was in himself—apart from the rank to which he was born—anything remarkable. You will never induce us to believe in all the "extraordinary and attractive" Pashas with whom you have drunk champagne. You give us no guarantees that Lord Kitchener—whatever his excellence as a soldier, general, and organizer—could be called "the British Empire's greatest son." There are, as it happens, other great qualities than military virtues, Herr Hedin. And it is certain that you will have just as little success in your book about Turkey as in this article in proving that your whitewashing of that crying scandal Turkey corresponds to anything in reality.

You are not a genuine European, Sven Hedin,

for you have not the European sense of reality. You indulge in fancies, so that you yourself believe in your fancies. You display to us the most ideal landscapes, and you think you can take *us* in—with the scenery of Potemkin.

* * * * *

"The Turks have now waged war for three hundred years," you say, with your curious contempt for figures. You may say just as well and with equal truth that Sweden has existed for three hundred years.

For in 1916 it was no less than 463 years since the Turks captured Constantinople and thus put an end to a brilliant Christian civilization. But the war-history of the Turks naturally does not begin in 1453. As early as 1356, Sultan Urchan had conquered the peninsula of Gallipoli and thus gained a firm footing in Europe. In 1288 Osman had founded the Turkish kingdom in Asia Minor. And the Turks had, of course, even before this waged war in and about their original homes in the steppes of Turan. Nay, if we do not conceive the Turks as synonymous with the Ottomans, there

were belligerent Turkish kingdoms even in the eleventh century. For it was then that the Seljuk Turks conquered Persia, the kingdom of Bagdad, Syria, and Iconium (in Asia Minor).

We may therefore justly say that the Turks have waged war for nine hundred years, nay, for a thousand years, if that adds to their merits. Christian knights of a different type from yourself, both French, English, Italian, German, and Scandinavian, fought against the Turks from the eleventh century onwards in those lands where you have drunk champagne with them. To these Christian nobles it was an abomination to see the Turks run riot in the Holy City and the land round about. Fleets of French and English knights anchored more than once at Joppa, below "Simon the tanner's house," without any Christian or any European being put out by it. At times Christendom was also in possession of the Holy Places. The various countries vied one with the other. At that time Germany also counted herself as belonging to Europe and Christendom.

When Constantinople at length fell into

the hands of the Turks—after a long siege and so horrible a massacre that to find the like we must follow in the footsteps of the Turks throughout the ages—Christendom was too divided and also too indifferent in religious matters to think of snatching his booty from the Sultan. So the Turks were able to rush onwards and make themselves masters of the whole Balkan Peninsula, of the east and south coasts of the Mediterranean, of southern Russia and all Hungary, and finally to menace Vienna itself.

But in 1566 came a change. The Turks were still terrible, but they were pressed backwards out of a part of their conquered territory. In 1699 they had lost Hungary, Siebenbürgen, Podolia, the Ukraine, the Morea, and Dalmatia. In 1718 they lost a part of Wallachia, the Banat, and Belgrade. In 1829 they lost parts of Greece and Armenia; in 1878, Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and East Rumelia, parts of Armenia again, in addition to Cyprus and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Finally, in 1912 Turkey lost Tripoli, and in 1913 her whole European territory except the district about Adrianople and

Constantinople. At the present moment Turkey is, from the territorial point of view, what she has always been culturally, an almost entirely Asiatic Power.

And—in this you are no doubt right—if the Entente is victorious in this war, the hour of Turkey has struck. Its existence as an Asiatic State will also be over, its territory will be divided into countries under the protection of Russia, England, France, and Italy. But, unlike you, both the countries thus protected and the rest of the world would probably hail such a change with satisfaction.

You are probably the first European, not of German birth, who loved the Turks and *Turkish rule*. I do not count the harmless æsthetes, who confound Turkey with the poetry of the East, with the Arabian Nights, dreams of the harem, and philosophic contemplation. I do not count the historical enthusiasts, who since the days of Charles XII think they owe Turkey a certain gratitude. A few historical sophists and makers of political paradoxes are your only supporters. But an excuse is to be found for them in their

ignorance of the real Turkey. In their eyes Turkey is still a Great Power. Or perhaps it is to them a museum, a sort of Skansen,[1] into which they will not allow to enter the noise and dust and uniformity of modern Europe. But in that case they should really not wish to let Turkey's present allies in there. For if any one has the disposition and the qualifications to efface that which is characteristically Oriental, the national and the antique in the life of the East, it is the absolutely ruthless German.

In one of his sketches of his travels, Otto Julius Bierbaum jests at the arrogance of the Germans towards everything which is not German. A German cannot go to France, he says, and see an olive-tree, without exclaiming:

"Sehr nett—aber was ist denn das gegen eine deutsche Eiche?" (Very nice—but what is that compared to a German oak?)

The Germans do not come to the East with any admiration for its civilization, but only for their own. They long to refit this

[1] A sort of park at Stockholm containing specimens of old Swedish houses and their fittings.—TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

dusty, untidy, old corner. German industrialism, German commercial travellers, German-Jews' Berlin taste in architecture, clothing, amusements, would soon make the East unrecognizable.

And the Germans have already made preparations for this task of the future. They have built railways in Mesopotamia, Syria, Asia Minor. They have flooded the Turkish Empire with their commercial travellers. Their Press has preached in ever louder tones about the German sphere of interest in the East. The world-war is in its inmost core a German industrial crusade to the East. Turkey is to become a German possession, if the Germans get the upper hand, a new wedge amongst the others between the British spheres of interest. Turkey is gradually to be quite Germanized, that is the goal—the goal which the Young Turks do not seem to have any idea of, but for which they are nevertheless fighting. Turkey as an independent State—her story is told, Sven Hedin; you know that probably better than most, although, as usual, you keep the truth to yourself.

The part you assign to the Germans in

Turkey is therefore your own invention. In reality the Germans are already the masters and rulers of the land, which you maintain is fighting for its independence. Your discourse about Turkey as a "native land" also sounds quite diverting. A country filled with the most different and mutually hostile peoples, ruled, or rather oppressed, impoverished, and betrayed, by a crowd of unscrupulous pashas; a country which is reckoned amongst the richest in the world, but whose mismanagement has plunged it into debt, poverty, and dependence—such a country you dare to call a "native land." Whose native land? The starving Syrians'? The exterminated Armenians'? The plundering and murdering nomadic Kurds'? The discontented Arabs'? The oppressed Jews' and Greeks'? The sluggish, ignorant Turkish peasants'—who would for a certainty exchange this "native land" with equanimity, nay, with joy, for tranquil conditions protected by law under England or France?

"And under Germany?" you ask. It is not, it will not be the same thing, Sven Hedin. For Germany, in her national self-

infatuation, such conceptions as international law, human dignity, and human charity do not exist. For the better amongst the Germans all this doubtless does exist, but hitherto it is not the *better* who have decided the actions of the German Empire. The decisive factor for Germany is military and economic power, industrial and commercial gain—the decisive factor is crass and blatant egoism, and to satisfy this egoism Germany recoils from no means, no sacrifices of her own sense of shame and of the welfare of others. I do not exaggerate, Sven Hedin; I shall afterwards prove—prove once more—what I have asserted, and you will not be able to prove the contrary.

So much I will say by way of introduction: your boasting about modern Turkey is as irresponsible as the rest of your boasting. One example: your Djemal Pasha has "with iron hand and tried wisdom" organized "the distribution of food in Syria." And the Americans at Jerusalem assured you that the grain would last for three years. The Americans did not say for whom nor for how many. Now, however, there comes a Syrian,

Gnekri Ganem, and tells us in European newspapers that up to November 1916 *one hundred and fifty thousand people* had died *of hunger* in Syria. One hundred and fifty thousand Syrians starved to death—shall we say in spite of, or because of, Djemal Pasha's "iron hand"?

At the same time there is given by the same source another specimen of the same quality which you prize so highly. The newspaper *Al-Mokattam* states that Baron Oppenheim—who represents Wilhelm II in Syria—made a characteristic remark to a Young Turk at Damascus. The Turkish military authorities, said the noble Junker, have harmless and unimportant persons hanged, but leave untouched the cultured Arabs, who create public opinion. The Turks would never be able to rule these districts until they had pulled up the stubborn weeds by the very roots. Two weeks later the Baron betook himself to Palestine, where he had a private conversation with Djemal Pasha. The result of this conversation?

Kulucy Bey, the Vali of Damascus, an avowed opponent of Oppenheim, was dismissed

on the spot, and the *élite* of the Arab element in Syria were sent to the gallows wholesale a few days later.

This is Djemal Pasha's "iron hand," Sven Hedin, and this is German influence in Turkey.

* * * * *

Your article and your other utterances in the Press do not touch on the Armenian question, a fact which would cause surprise, if we had not ceased to feel surprise in your case. Ever since the 'eighties this question has moved the conscience of the whole world. A special periodical, *Pro Armenia*, edited by Anatole France and others, has given expression to Europe's sympathy with the fate of Armenia. And quite recently the question has in a most horrible manner again become acute. But you prefer not to mention it with one word.

Presumably you will not be able to do this in the book about Turkey which you have announced. Not to write about Armenia when writing about Turkey would be to write about Prussia and forget her Polish provinces, or about sixteenth-century Spain and forget the Moriscoes,

or about Louis XIV and forget the dragonnades and the Huguenot emigrants. But in what sense will you write? Will you for once speak out your mind and tell your friends the truth?

Whoever has been so simple as to believe you capable of anything of the kind has already had a hint of his simplicity. You have granted an interview to an Armenian, M. Varandian, and told him that all was well in Turkish Armenia. You had given alms to two Armenian girls—who did not look at all unhappy! And consequently——

In this case it merely surprises one that you wasted your alms on them. You could certainly have made use of your money in another quarter, where you encountered real misfortune. Or have you never—either in Turkey or elsewhere—encountered misfortune, the misfortune of others? Have you always, both abroad and at home, seen powerful and prosperous people, iron-handed pashas, willing to serve you with letters of introduction, and extraordinary generals, who placed motor-cars and cabs at your disposal? You are a very fortunate man, Sven Hedin, I say it without

envy, for, to be candid, I should not care to possess your happiness. I should not like to be so blind and deaf to the sufferings of the world and so mute in the face of injustice, oppression, and misery, caused by the powerful. I should not wish to sell my soul, my heart, my ears and eyes, my tongue and my pen, for all the favour and all the advantages the powerful might confer.

I shall now—whether you listen or not—tell you a little about one of the peoples at whose executioners' table you drank champagne. Tell of the people's misfortune, which you ignored. I shall summon up this people's past and future against you; I shall likewise make Germans and Turks bear witness—and bear witness against you, who have dared to dispute that the Armenian people has reason to complain. And however cold and scornful and sure of victory you may be, some day—as true as there is a Nemesis—amongst all the evidence which will condemn you, your cocksure way will be the strongest and the most damning.

* * * * *

The Armenians belong—unlike Turks, Arabs, and Jews—to the Indo-European group of nations. Most European peoples count themselves as belonging to this group, the group which hitherto has been the ruling and the decisive factor all over the earth.

The Armenians are at present the subjects of the three States whose frontiers meet in their country, viz. Turkey, Persia, and Russia. But once upon a time—long ago—they were a free nation and lived in an independent and powerful Armenian State, known to us from the Asiatic wars of the Romans.

We have all read about Tigranes the Great (92–36 B.C.), who conquered Mesopotamia and Syria, was defeated by Pompey in the year 66, but had Great Armenia restored to him. His reign stands out as the high-water mark of political power—which, as you perhaps know, is not the same as historical importance. We read also about Tiridates, who lived about 300 A.D. and was baptized twelve entire years before Constantine. Armenia's religious development coincided for a time with the development of the eastern portions of the Roman Empire. But even after the first œcumenical councils

the Armenian Church went its own way. It embraced a naïvely simple conception of the Divinity and the mystery of reconciliation, repudiated the Trinity and the two natures, and taught that God Himself became man and suffered death to satisfy His own demands. This heresy is called in ecclesiastical history, that of the Monophysites. That this heresy did not make the Armenian people less religious or less moral than other Christians is shown by Armenia's history and literature down to our own days.

A kind of Pope, the *Katholikos*, stood and still stands at the head of the hierarchy, whose upper class had to live in celibacy, whilst the lower priesthood were instructed to marry. The monastic system flourished here as in the rest of the Christian world, and here too we have to thank the monasteries and the clergy for the largest part of the literary production of earlier times. Like Hellas and other countries, Armenia had its period of oral "literature" before it had a literature recorded in writing. From this first period we have the name Aëdes. In the fifth century, when King Vramschapuh had succeeded

the Arsacidian dynasty, the Katholikos Sahab and the Vartaped (prior) Mesrop founded the written literature. The language soon attained perfection, and the "classical" Armenian of the fifth century is compared by linguists of the present day with classical Greek.

Armenia was deprived of her independence by the Persian Sassanids. Then followed the occupation by the Arabs in the seventh century. Next, independence was regained, and the kingdom was divided into two parts, with the capitals Vostan and Ani. Under the Bagratid dynasty, Ani, whose ruins are admired even now, flourished greatly. The Armenian States took part in the Crusades, of course on the side of the Crusaders, and they are mentioned by the Pope as especially meriting the gratitude of Christendom. To this time French influence goes back, which has affected the Armenian language and civilization and is perceptible and powerful even in our own times.

Armenia, with her fortress-like mountain-walls, seemed created for defence against Asiatic barbarism. The brave mountain people

rendered important services to the Byzantine Empire. No less than ten Armenian generals in Byzantine pay became more or less distinguished Byzantine emperors—we remember the names of Phocas, John Zimiskes, and Basil II. Byzantium was, however, not always ruled with equal skill; the Greek Empire pursued at times—like other empires—a shortsighted policy, and it neglected to support the Armenians against the attacks from the East. First came the Seljuks in the eleventh century, finally the Ottomans in the fourteenth.

With the Turkish occupation of the country vanished, perhaps for all time, its political, but not for that reason its cultural, independence. The power of the crude and untalented Turks was always merely outward force and oppression. They were warriors, or rather, organized robbers. For peaceful pursuits, for literary arts and intellectual culture, they felt the contempt of the brutal warrior. Whilst the masses of their people carried on agriculture so as barely to subsist, all real enterprise—the cultivation of gardens and vineyards, industry, commerce, the fine arts, and also the larger part of agriculture—was left

to the Christian subject nations. Amongst these the Armenian people were beyond all comparison the most prominent. The Armenians were not only as if created to gain importance and influence under careless and inefficient masters; this people, which had been conquered by superior force, would have gained esteem and prosperity wherever it had lived. Shah Abbas the Great of Persia set such store by Armenian enterprise and artistic diligence that he had thousands of these foreigners transported by force to the interior of Persia. And Armenians, who immigrated into Europe during the Middle Ages, have in our days been the salt of society in certain parts of Poland.

It has been said that, on the whole, friendly relations existed between the Armenians and their masters until the end of the last century. Mahommedans and Christians, it has been said, were well able to live side by side under the same government. The Turks have not been intolerant in religious matters. But how do we know that? In Turkey, a country without supervision and criticism, many disputes naturally occurred unnoticed. If massacres and depor-

tations have not been denounced until our days, that scarcely proves that they have not taken place. But as far as that goes, we may admit that the Turks did not seek absolutely to *exterminate* the Armenian population until the time of Enver Pasha and Sven Hedin. And this kind postponement was doubtless due to the fact that the Turks considered that they needed the Armenians. A lazy person is rather apt to need some one more industrious and willing to look after him. And if the Armenian was of no more importance to the Turk than a milch-cow or a draught-ox, this was sufficient reason not to slaughter such useful cattle. In our days it was thought that a substitute could be found, and consequently . . .

Even during the years of the war and ever since ancient times, the Armenians have been Turkey's source of wealth. They have created a large part of the values which bring in gold, and with the help of their credit they have arranged not only transactions in merchandise, but also most loans at home and abroad. They have been farmers, gardeners, manufacturers, architects, journalists,

authors, tradesmen, bankers, diplomats, and statesmen. On account of their capacity for "making money" and negotiating loans, they have been compared to the Jews. But authorities on these two races in the intercourse of the East assure us that the difference is great. The Armenians are often farmers, whilst Jews seldom handle the plough. The former show greater honesty in business and are more inclined to culture, more tolerant, cheerful, and spontaneous. The faults which the Armenian has here and there acquired are both explicable and pardonable, when we consider his position, without rights or means of defence in a country like Turkey.

In this country, as long as it was a Great Power, the Armenian population was indeed regarded as a mere handful. According to the figures of the Patriarchate at Constantinople for 1882, there were then in Turkey 2,660,000 Armenians, of whom 1,630,000 were in Armenia proper, in the so-called six vilayets: Sivas, Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir, and Mamuret-ul-Aziz. The figures of the Patriarchate for 1912 show that after the massacres and deportations, of a population of 2,615,000

in the six vilayets, only 1,018,000, or 38·9 per cent., were Armenians.

But this handful was and continued to be the *élite*. According to the figures for 1901-2, in the vilayet of Sivas importation was carried on by 141 Armenian merchants against 13 Turks and 12 Greeks; exportation by 127 Armenians and 23 Turks; banking by 32 Armenians and 5 Turks; retail business and handicrafts by 6,800 Armenians, 2,550 Turks, and 450 of various nations; industry, factories, and mills by 130 Armenians, 20 Turks, 3 foreigners. Amongst the workmen and business assistants, 14,000 were of Armenian, 3,500 of Turkish, and 200 of Greek nationality.

Equally brilliant and instructive are the figures in another sphere: the schools. In 1901-2 there were in Turkish Armenia 438 Armenian schools with 36,839 pupils, in Cilicia 90 Armenian schools with 9,182 pupils, and in other parts of the Turkish Empire 275 Armenian schools with 35,225 pupils, altogether 803 schools with 81,226 pupils. In addition to these there were Armenian schools of a Catholic or Protestant tendency to the number of 250, with 3,000 pupils. At the beginning of the war it was stated that there

were "now" in Turkish Armenia 785 schools with 82,000 pupils—whilst the Turks had founded there 150 schools for 17,000 scholars, and the Kurds had no schools at all.

Moreover, it is easy to show that even in our days the Armenians have shown talent and interest for other tasks than those of commerce and industry. Several celebrated Russian Generals—Melikoff and Tergukasoff amongst others—were Armenians. Literature has been cultivated and has flourished ever since Mesrop in the year 404 invented the thirty-six Armenian letters, and since the Bible was translated in 433. It is French influence—influence dating back to the Crusades—which has fructified modern Armenian literature. In the eighteenth century Rollin, Fénelon, Bossuet were admired models, then during the nineteenth Lamartine, Sue, Hugo, Beaudelaire gained favour and found disciples. Archag Tchobanian, Hovhannes Toumanian, Armène Ohanian, Djivani, Daniel Varoujan are poets of whom no country and no language need be ashamed. Amongst story-writers Hambartzoum Arakelian occupies a prominent place. From a little French collection of translations I mention *Yegho's Blind Fate*, a description of modern working-class life, *It is*

Easter, an historical story, *Heydar-Chah*, which reminds one of the Arabian Nights, *Boughdan bêk*, dealing with agricultural and socialistic conditions, the very modern story *Aram's Marriage*, and *You are Very Rich*, which is so interesting from the point of view of national psychology. All these products are excellent both as works of art and as cultural documents. From the standpoint of ethnology and national psychology, they throw wonderful flashes of light on the Armenian character, with its tender, visionary, chivalrous and thoroughly honest nature. What the Armenian has been able to become under the unsettled conditions of Turkey, in its venality and corruption, in its agglomeration, not to say its mire, of peoples, well, about this let the highly moral Turks and Germans tell. The people's own opinion of itself is to be found in literature, and that opinion probably merits some consideration. It is sometimes said that a people has the literature it deserves.

But if the Armenians possess such excellent qualities, how have they forfeited the favour and good opinion of the Turks—and their allies the Germans? The Turks have, as we have said, regarded and treated the Armenians as milch-

and draught-cattle. When these cattle began to insist upon human rights, they suddenly became a nuisance: Through their talent and their growing prosperity and influence the Armenians finally became a source of alarm and a danger to the existing wretchedness. On account of their untiring and intelligent nature they were too closely related to the Europe which the Turk hated, and with which they had also the common bond of race. Whilst the Turks of to-day on the whole resemble the Turks of the year 1200, the Armenian people has since then developed just as much as other progressive nations. It had grown over the heads of its masters, and these masters suspected, not without reason, that these Christian slaves laughed behind their backs.

The Armenians had kept well abreast of European thought, not only in the literary, but also in the sphere of political philosophy. Liberal and Socialist ideas were spread amongst the Armenians, who studied in large numbers at European universities. On account of conditions in Turkey they were, of course, not allowed to work for, nor even to discuss, these new ideas. It was the Armenians outside Turkey who discussed them, and who formed the committees and societies

which had more or less secret branches within the Turkish Empire. It is clear that after these theories of society and social movements had got a footing in the Ottoman dominions, they would turn to criticize the wretchedness existing there, and to agitate against it. Probably nowhere would Liberalism and Socialism have so much to advocate and demand as in Turkey.

The first Armenian organs and societies were, however, of a singularly modest nature. Portukalian, who in 1889 began to edit *L'Arménia* at Marseilles, ventured to send his publication to the Sultan himself, at which the latter was very offended. Nor did the later Radical and Socialist organs, *Hintschak* and *Droschak*, by any means stand for an attack on the integrity of Turkey. They had social, not political aims, and they worked in connection and in agreement with the Turkish Liberal Party, which had existed since the 'forties, the *Young Turks*. About 1876 it is true that the latter began to be transformed into Nationalists in the narrower sense, but they long preserved their Liberal trappings. The Armenian Progressives of all shades of opinion supported them and built many hopes on them. In 1908, when the Young Turks were at last

victorious, the joy of the Armenians was great and sincere—and especially at Constantinople was it demonstrative. At the fraternal feast in which Turkish mullahs, Jewish rabbis, and Christian priests embraced one another, the victory of the Party of Progress and the dawn of a new era of unity and equality were celebrated. Only too soon it was to be seen that it had all been a society show.

So much is certain: it is a slander and a pretext to accuse the Armenians of desiring to bring about the dissolution of Turkey. The Armenians as a whole and a great majority were loyal subjects, however little Turkey had deserved their loyalty. The Armenians were warmly attached to the mountains, where their fathers had dwelt and fought since time immemorial. They were of too practical a bent to base serious hopes on the dissolution of Turkey. What they demanded was security of life and property, and reforms which would confirm these modest human rights. Time after time they petitioned for these objects they desired. They formed societies for the purpose of working in behalf of these reforms. And only when the Turkish Government remained deaf and inflexible did they dare to appeal to international congresses like that of San Stefano

in 1878, or again just before the war from January 26 to February 8, 1914.

This is their history and this their crime. In spite of conquest and extortion they have dared to exist and to work, dared to preserve their Christian religion in a Mohammedan community, their industry and energy in a slack and somnolent society, their faith in the future under a Government which had reason to fear it. As a nation they have committed no crime; on the contrary, they have merited the gratitude of Christendom since its first centuries and the gratitude of Turkey, not least during recent epochs. They have been an example to many more fortunate nations. And they have been the salt, the energy, and the vitality of the decaying Empire where it was their unhappy fate to live and die. But they have *not* received from Europe the help which they had every right to count on. And from Turkey they have received the most infamous treatment as thanks for unexampled fidelity under the most difficult conditions.

It was under Abdul Hamid II that their lot began to arouse general sympathy. After his unsuccessful war during the first years of his reign, Abdul Hamid had been forced to surrender

a part of Armenia to Russia. Perhaps he feared that sooner or later he would have to give up the rest. And at the Peace Congress the Turkish Armenians made themselves heard, and Abdul Hamid made a mental note of the fact. These Rayahs dared to murmur; they should pay for it. Country after country and nation upon nation had been withdrawn from Turkey's wretched rule. As long as Europe alone was concerned, perhaps it did not matter so much; the Turks have never felt themselves to be Europeans. These European possessions were colonies, so to speak, whilst the mother-country lay in Asia. But whoever dared to touch this Asiatic "mother-country"

There was, however, now an Armenian question, of which the Powers availed themselves to interfere with the Sultan's government. But the interference of the Powers was in reality of little importance. They were at variance one with the other; they watched one another more than Turkey or Armenia. England and France did not allow Russia to extend her territory either westwards or southwards. And when they at length began to give way and to agree to Russia's demands for energetic measures, they encountered resistance in Berlin. This opposition was per-

ceptible as far back as the Berlin Congress in July 1878. Bismarck, who said that all the blood of Bulgaria was not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier, showed just as little inclination to sacrifice anything for the Armenians. Nay, his refusal to consent to, or to permit, energetic measures had probably deeper reasons than this.

Abdul Hamid, who was a bad ruler but an excellent diplomat, soon perceived what aid he might receive from Germany. Turkey and the German Empire were two Powers that were beginning to find each other. Abdul hoped that the young, Conservative, military State would free him from the Liberal Western Powers and insistent Russia. And Bismarck and his successors began to cast greedy looks at the central lands of Turkey in Asia—Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia. Abdul favoured the German aims in the hope of thus thwarting those of Russia, which seemed more dangerous. He generously granted concessions for railways and other public works. With open arms he received German trade, which was seeking communications with the Levant. But now there appeared an obstacle—perhaps not entirely unexpected — in the shape of the

Armenians. The latter, who in reality had the trade of Turkey in their hands, seemed to be quite willing to add trade relations with Germany to those already existing with England and France. But the Germans found more than their match here—it was *they* who lost by their dealings with the merchant princes of the Levant. Their commercial travellers were not supple—or upright—enough, and the Armenians did not abandon their principles in order to suit the Berlin Jews. This upset the plans of both the Germans and the Turks. In 1894 German-Turkish black-lists were made of Armenians who had not agreed to the German conditions of trade. And that same year the first great or better known massacre of the Armenians took place.

What share the Germans had in the frightful massacres from 1894-6 is probably not yet known. Of course, they cleared themselves of the charge. But it is a fact that these massacres were made possible, that Abdul Hamid felt bold enough to challenge the Western Powers in this way, thanks to his assurance of Germany's support or "active neutrality." The Germans had settled on becoming the "Sick Man's" flatterer, in the hope of becoming his heir. Old Moltke had said:

"The Turk is the only gentleman in the East." And Rohrbach maintained that the "Turks were Indo-Germans," an assertion which is just as correct as that the pancake is one of the fixed stars. "The Turk," Rohrbach continues, "has a simple and sober, but very sound and, for practical life, useful morality." Which may be right from the bellicose, German point of view. The morality which seemed to the Germans "useful" in the case of Belgium, seemed to the Turks equally "sound" in the case of the Armenians. We see also that the minute the Armenian massacres are over in 1896, Kaiser Wilhelm hastens to Constantinople to embrace Abdul Hamid publicly and assure him of his support — whereupon the same Hadji Guilloum, arrayed in Oriental garb and riding on an ass, enters Jerusalem.

This is conduct, Sven Hedin, which you presumably find very edifying in a Christian Emperor. You yourself have trudged in the steps of Hadji Guilloum as well as you could, and you probably agree with ex-Pastor Naumann that:

"We need an Emperor who is pious to the core. But we should have cause for fear as soon as religion in the narrower sense, if only

in the slightest degree, weakened our political power of action. The worship of kings is a great, far-sighted, just, and strict policy."

In other words: "We need a living decoration who can make the masses believe that he is a Christian, and that they too must be Christian, that is, comply with all the whims of the authorities and the upper classes. But we should feel uneasy if we had a Christian Government, which for that reason shunned lying, deceit, theft, and murder." For the worship of kings—well, we have seen during the last few years what it is like!

* * * * *

"The only way to make an end of the Armenian question," Abdul Hamid is reported to have said, "is to make an end of the Armenians!"

This is perhaps not an historical utterance, but it is symbolical. For it is in this way that Abdul tried to solve the Armenian question.

After long having meditated, he decided on the expedient by which tyrants have always achieved their aim: dissension. He resolved to egg on the peoples one against the other, and this plan met with no difficulties in a land like Turkey.

In Armenia proper there had lived since time immemorial an Iranian people, the Kurds. They had been there at the time of the Turkish invasion. At Bitlis the Turkish conquerors had deposed a Kurd dynasty of princes. Moreover, the Kurds probably occupied the same position in 1300 as at the present day; that is, some of them carried on agriculture, whilst the rest, who were the most numerous, were robbers, and from their mountain aeries attacked the cultivated districts. Armenian literature preserves episodes of the struggles with these marauders. However, the Kurds were not entirely destitute of amiable qualities; they are described as hospitable and good-natured, and it is probable that if they had been left to themselves, they would have contented themselves with the usual plundering for household purposes.

Here was the material which Abdul Hamid could use. He decided to kill two birds with one stone: nominally at least to make an end of this brigandage and to make an end of the Armenians once for all. For this purpose he had all the Kurds provided with the same uniforms and weapons, and henceforward they received the title, rank, and dignity of cavalry regiments, the

Hamidije Cavalry. He drew their attention to the fact that they were orthodox Mohammedans —which, as far as that goes, not all of them were—and that the Armenians—these Christian dogs—had property. More was not necessary. The Kurd brigands, dressed up as uniformed troops, rushed without the slightest cause at the Armenians, who were left to their mercy, murdered them wholesale with the most refined tortures, violated the women, sold the children as slaves, and plundered the Armenian homes. This was in brief the course of the massacre of 1894 which brought Europe to its senses. The Great Powers intervened and compelled the Sultan to promise reforms for the six Armenian vilayets. He replied by promising—*on his word of honour*—to carry out reforms throughout his Empire. His reply in reality was the fresh, even more violent massacres of 1895 and 1896. They were partly an expression of wounded pride; they were to show that "the Sultan was master in his own house," and he knew the unity of the Powers so well that he was able to venture this demonstration.

Religious fanaticism perhaps played a certain part; in any case it served as a pretext. Here

and there—but by no means everywhere—the attacked Armenians were promised their lives if they would be converted to Islam. And horrible examples are told of the torture applied to the refractory. An unfortunate being who had been tied to a stake, first had one hand cut off, whereupon they boxed his ears with the severed hand. Then he was also deprived of the other hand, whereupon his ears were cut off and he was ordered to eat them up. The next step was to cut out his tongue and to burn his mouth with a glowing iron. This torture lasted for many hours. . . .

It was after these charitable actions that Kaiser Wilhelm hastened to Constantinople and kissed the Sultan on both cheeks. One finds some difficulty in finding a reasonable explanation of this expression of joy.

The closing years of Abdul Hamid's reign were not years of unalloyed bliss. His energetic measures of 1894-6 had at last united all Europe —except Germany, of course. Efforts were made to extort the necessary reforms and to subject them to supervision. It was thanks to the support of the Powers, and favoured by them, that the Young Turks in 1908 succeeded in obtaining

a constitution for Turkey. The joy of the Armenians was unfeigned; no one had based greater expectations than they on the revolution of the Young Turks. The first disappointment came in the following year—the massacre of the Armenians at Adana!

From 1894 to 1909 several hundred thousand Armenians had fallen as victims to deliberate murder. The most horrible atrocities, the most hideous plunderings, had marked the doings of the murderers. But all this was nothing in comparison with what was still to come. The Young Turks, no wiser through the misfortunes of the Tripoli and Balkan Wars, hurled their tottering State into new adventures. Turkey became Germany's humble servant in the world-war. For this is Turkey's real position, Sven Hedin, nor can you convince us that it is not. If Germany now and then has feigned consideration for Turkey's right to freedom of action, it has been a preconcerted pretence or a white lie to avoid intervention. It is Germany who has reorganized the Turkish military power so that it has been able to resist. Von der Goltz Pasha and Liman von Sanders are names that have won celebrity in this respect. However, as you undoubtedly

know, with military power all other power goes in countries like Germany and Turkey, where civil interests have always had to give first place to military claims. And with power goes responsibility. Germany, who possessed and possesses such authority with her allies that they may be regarded as her vassals—Germany only needed to give a friendly hint and the Christian subject peoples would have received the rights of human beings, nay, even of citizens. Germany only needed to murmur to save the Armenians. Germany was able, but *unwilling* to do so; that is the answer to all reflections in this connection. And she was *unwilling* because she "needed the Turks," but not the Armenians, who had been a hindrance to her commercial plans. The whole Armenian people stood on Germany's black-list: it had dared to thwart German commercial travellers; the Germans for their part would raise no objection if they disappeared—not only out of Turkey, but out of existence. You know that it is so, Sven Hedin, and no doubt you recognize the story of Naboth's vineyard.

Then you can, if you like, make the Armenian question an English invention, as the German spy, C. A. Bratter, did. You can paint in

glowing colours the misfortunes which the agents of the Entente brought about in Turkey. And you can, like the Turkish Government, try to make us believe that the *revolutionary* Armenian people, in agreement with the Russians, tried to start a movement for rebellion throughout Turkey the moment the Russians marched across the frontier. In the long run you will not succeed in making such wild stories into history. They are biassed inventions of the same value as most stories circulated by the Turks.

It is possible that after Turkey's declaration of war in November 1914, a number of Armenians dwelling on the frontier fled into Russian Armenia. As some excuse for this desertion may be mentioned the treatment which, as recently as 1909, had been meted out to the Armenians in Turkey. Those living on the border in particular might with reason expect the worst on the outbreak of war. It is also possible —although it has nowhere been proved—that when the declaration of war was made known dissatisfaction was expressed in some places here and there, or even that demonstrations took place *in favour of* the Powers against whom war had been declared. But even

in this case we must not pass too harsh a judgment on the Armenians. The sympathy which their sufferings met with had come from France, England, and Russia—those countries against which they were now to wage war. Their feelings ought therefore to be comprehensible—the same feelings as our Conservatives would give vent to if Sweden declared war on Germany. But it is a long way from feelings, and even demonstrations, to conspiracies. Nor was there any talk on the part of the Turkish Government about either conspiracies or desertions or opposition, when at the end of 1914 and the beginning of 1915 the Armenians were conscribed for military service. The Armenians had borne the burden of war in 1912 and 1913 like other subjects; they bore it again now without showing themselves refractory. Nevertheless, the Turks manifested a certain lack of confidence in them this time, and made use of them for civil military service, road-making and the like. In this way this advantage was gained for the Turks and their plans, that the Armenians were unarmed.

As civilian road-makers they were less able

than ever to think of revolution, nor did they ever dream of such a thing. It is indeed difficult to imagine how a people, scattered in what were often very sparse colonies all over an extensive empire, could organize for a revolution. If isolated supporters of extreme ideas of freedom made themselves obnoxious, why not secure these agitators? Why not arrest and try and punish the guilty, and why extend the punishment—a punishment *without* trial and inquiry—to innocent infants, to old men and women, to a whole people, which, like any other, was naturally divided into the most different groups of opinion?

The answer is and remains the same: there was nothing to try—no crime and no criminals. If one were to be punished, the whole people had to share his fate. The Armenian people was either entirely innocent or entirely guilty. Its crime was, that it existed—that it stood in the way of the Turks and perhaps the Germans also.

In April 1915, or five months after Turkey's declaration of war, orders from the Government at Constantinople were telephoned, tele

graphed, printed, and put up in all towns and villages where there were Armenians, that "the Armenians were to be removed to new dwelling-places."

You know, Sven Hedin, what such an order means in Turkey. You know the author of the order, your friend Talaat Bey, a man "with a will of iron, who did not feel dizzy at the responsibility." You know that from Talaat, just as little as from your friend Djemal, there is no appeal. They are absolute, these men—you say it with a voice vibrating with admiration. There is this about absolutism, that one knows where to place the responsibility. Talaat and his colleagues in the Government alone bear the responsibility (in Turkey, at any rate) for what now followed.

A space of a few hours was given for the execution of the order, occasionally not even so long. It was stated that all those fit for military service, who had not reported themselves—including those who had bought themselves off—were to march off before the others. Fit for military service in Turkey means all males between fifteen and seventy. The rest, invalids, women, and children, were

to have the right to take their furniture with them; the Government would provide ox-carts to remove human beings and goods. To take all they possessed was, of course, not to be thought of, at any rate in the case of the wealthier. Heaps of furniture and household goods were sold by auction in the greatest haste. The rest was stowed away in the ox-carts, or in any other vehicles which could be procured. And so the caravans of homeless people, escorted by Turkish gendarmes, surged through all the streets in all the communities where Armenians were settled, throughout all Turkey. And their destination? The new dwelling-places which the Government had opened up for them—places that needed to be colonized and lay so far from the theatre of war that the *enemies of the Empire* could be tolerated there.

The programme was radical and ruthless, but it appeared comparatively humane for Turkey. How was this programme carried out? The male population which marched off first under a guard encountered, after a short march, bands of Kurds, who murdered them all: youths, men in the prime of life,

and men in old age. Whereupon the guard returned to escort the caravan of women. When they had advanced for some hours from their native town or village, they were ordered to move out of the vehicles and carriages. The latter were sent back to the starting-point. In the meantime the Kurds had again appeared. They now rushed upon the women and children, killed, violated, and carried off everything that was young and robust, and let the old trudge on amidst the derision and ill-treatment of brutal guards. Pregnant women fell down with weariness, hunger, and blows. The desperate women hurled themselves and their babes into ravines, rivers, and lakes. And the few who reached their destination—found it a desert, where nothing grew or could grow, but which Talaat Bey wished to colonize with old women and emaciated children. . . .

I see you sneer, Sven Hedin, the charming sneer you show in one of the pictures from your last journey. Perhaps you will dispute the truth of this account. You will perhaps find it—in all its unsensational, dryly schematic simplicity —a mere invention. You will say that all the

cruelty of the Turks was either necessary, on account of conspiracies and rebellions, or invented by the hypocritical Englishmen, with whom Americans and Swiss, for inexplicable reasons, have made common cause. You will say that you have studied the conditions on the spot; that "in Turkey everything is going on as usual"; that the Young Turkish Government maintains model order; and that the Armenians are undoubtedly living in the greatest prosperity. You met personally no less than *two* Armenian girls, to whom you gave alms, and who did not look at all unhappy. . . .

Very good; I shall now let you hear a few German witnesses. Will you dismiss the Germans, too, with your smile of malicious derision?

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REPORT OF THE TEACHERS AT THE GERMAN SECONDARY SCHOOL OF ALEPPO (TURKISH SYRIA) TO THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT BERLIN.

ALEPPO, *October* 8, 1915.

We beg respectfully to report to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs as follows:

We think it our duty to draw the attention

of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the fact that our work as a school will lose all moral foundation and all respect in the eyes of the natives unless the German Government is really able to mitigate the brutality which is being used against the exiled wives and children of Armenians who have been killed.

In view of the terrible scenes which are daily enacted before our eyes near our school, our work has come to be a mockery of all human feelings. How can we teachers read *Snow-white and the Seven Dwarfs* with our Armenian children, how are we to decline and conjugate, whilst in the courtyards opposite and alongside the school Death reaps his harvests amongst the starving kinsmen of our pupils: girls, boys, women, lying half-naked on the ground, whilst others breathe their last breath amidst the dead and the coffins already ordered for them?

Forty or fifty skeletons remain, when between two and three thousand healthy peasant-women from Upper Armenia are dragged here. The handsome fall victims to the brutal passions of their guards. The ugly fall victims to blows, hunger, and thirst, for though they lie on the

shore of a piece of water, the thirsty are not allowed to drink. Europeans who wish to distribute bread amongst the hungry are prevented from doing so. Over a hundred corpses of people who have died of starvation are daily conveyed out of Aleppo.

And all this goes on under the eyes of high Turkish officials. Forty to fifty skeletons lie heaped up in a yard close by our school. They have become like lunatics. They have forgotten the faculty of eating. When they are given bread, they place it indifferently aside. They groan softly and await death.

The natives maintain that this is Ta-â-lim el alman (the doctrine of the Germans). Horrible stains on Germany's escutcheon threaten here to engrave themselves on the historical consciousness of the Oriental peoples. The more cultured inhabitants of Aleppo say that the Germans probably do not desire these atrocities. And perhaps the German people does not know about them either. Otherwise, how could newspaper articles find any credence among the truth-loving Germans which speak of the humane treatment of Armenians guilty of high treason? But perhaps the Ger-

man Government has its hands bound by certain treaties limiting its powers? Nay, when it is a question of thousands of helpless women and children being sacrificed to certain death by starvation, then the words "opportune" and "limiting treaties" no longer hold good. Every civilized being is then empowered, and it is his sacred duty to intervene. Our reputation in the East is at stake. Even Turks and Arabs of more refined feelings shake their heads in pity, when, during the journey through the town, brutal soldiers hammer away with cudgels at women in the final stages of pregnancy, who are scarcely able to drag themselves along.

Terrible sacrifices of human beings are still in store, as is shown by the enclosed order from Djemal Pasha ("The engineers of the Bagdad Railway are forbidden to photograph the trains of Armenians. All plates already used must be handed over within twenty-four hours, on pain of prosecution by martial law"), a proof that those in high places fear light on the matter, but have no intention of making an end of these scenes, which are a disgrace to humanity.

We are aware that the Ministry for Foreign Affairs has already received from other quarters

detailed accounts of conditions here. But as nothing has been altered in the methods of deportation, we feel it doubly our duty to make this report, especially as we who live abroad clearly observe the immense danger which here threatens the German name.

DIRECTOR HUBER. DR. NIEPAGE.
DR. GRÆTER. M. SPICKER.

Of the signatories, Dr. Græter was a German-Swiss, the rest were Germans. Of course, the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs paid no attention to this report and did not allow it to appear in the Press.

In the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* (Monatshefte für geschichtliche und theoretische Missionskunde), edited by Professor Dr. Julius Richter (Berlin-Steglitz) and Pastor Dr. Joh. Warneck (Bethel bei Bielefeld), Verlag Martin Warneck (Berlin, W., Schellingstrasse, 5), there appeared in the number for November 1915, Part 2, pp. 506 et seq., the following description of the massacres in Armenia. By an order of the War Press Bureau at Berlin on November 10, 1915, the reprinting or spreading of this article was prohibited.

"We cannot refrain from communicating to our readers at least a few brief extracts from the many original accounts of the terrible misery of the Armenians. They take us first to the starting-point for the deportations, then to a town through which the crowds of exiles marched, and then to the desert whither they had been banished.

"On July 7th the first transport left Erzingan. It consisted chiefly of more prosperous persons, who were able to hire a carriage. And they are said really to have reached their nearest destination, Kharput. On July 8th, 9th, and 18th, crowds again left the town, altogether between twenty and twenty-five thousand persons. . . . Very soon we heard reports that the Kurds had attacked and completely plundered the defenceless crowd. The truth of these reports was confirmed by our Turkish cook. Weeping, she told us that the Kurds had ill-treated and killed the women and thrown the children into the Euphrates. . . . On July 11th regular troops were sent out to 'punish the Kurds.' Instead of this, the *troops cut to pieces the whole defenceless crowd, which consisted for the*

most part of women and children. From Turkish soldiers, who themselves took part, we have heard that the women on their bended knees begged for mercy, and that many themselves cast their children into the river. To our horrified question: 'And did you fire at women and children?' came the reply: 'What were we to do? These were our orders.' One added: 'It was pitiable to see. And I did not fire.' After the massacre a hunt was made for human beings for several days in the cornfields round about Erzingan, where many are said to have hidden. . . . On the evening of the 18th we were walking up and down with our friend, Herr G., in front of our house. Then a gendarme met us and told us that hardly ten minutes' walk from the hospital a band of women and children from the Baiburt district were spending the night. He himself had helped to drive them on, and told with moving words how they had fared on the long way. Killing and slaying, they drive them on. Every day ten to twelve men are killed and thrown into ravines. *Children, who cannot keep up, have their skulls smashed. Women are robbed and violated.* 'I myself have

had the naked bodies of three women buried. May God remember that!' Thus he ended his horrifying account. . . . Early next morning we heard the doomed march past. We joined the throng and accompanied them out of the town. The misery was indescribable. There were only two men in the crowd. Some of the women had lost their senses. One cried: 'We will become Mohammedans, *we will become Germans,* whatever you like, but save us! Now they are taking us to Kemagh to cut our throats! . . .' On the way we met a long caravan of exiles, who had left their villages quite recently and were still in good preservation. We had to wait a long time to let them pass, and shall never forget the sight: a few men, otherwise women and many children. Many of them had fair hair and big blue eyes, which regarded us with such deadly seriousness and with such unconscious solemnity, as if they were already angels in heaven. In silence, without a sound, they wandered on, big and little, even women advanced in years, who could only be kept erect on the back of an ass with difficulty; all, all, to be dashed, tied together, from high cliffs into the waves of

the Euphrates. 'That is how they usually deal with them,' a Greek coachman told us; 'and a long way down the river bodies have been found.' My heart became like ice. Our gendarme told us that he had taken such a company of three thousand women from Mama Chatun, two days' journey from Erzerum, to Kemagh. 'All gone,' he said. We asked: 'If you will kill them, why do you not do so in the villages? Why first reduce them to such misery?' He replied: 'Just so, they must taste misery! *And what should we do with the bodies? They would stink!*'

"Between May 10th and 30th were arrested 1,200 more of the most respected *Armenians and other Christians* in the vilayets of Diarbekir and Mamuret-ul-Aziz, *without regard to their denominations.*' On May 30th, 674 of them were stowed away on thirteen Tigris boats, on the pretext of taking them to Mosul. The transportation was under the direction of the Vali's adjutant with about fifty gendarmes. Half of the gendarmes were distributed amongst the boats, whilst the other half rode along the bank. Soon after their departure, the prisoners were deprived of their money (about 6,000 lire)

and clothes, and these exiles were thrown into the river. The gendarmes on the bank had to see that no one should escape alive. The clothes were sold in the market at D——.

"In the vilayet of Aleppo, the inhabitants of Hadshin, Sheer, Albistan, Göksun, Tasholuk, Seitun, all the villages of Alabash, Geben, Shivilgi, Furnus, and the neighbouring villages of Fundatshak, Hassanbeli, Charne, Lappashli, Dörtjol and other places, were deported and sent in detachments to the desert, on the pretext that they were to colonize it. The inhabitants of the village of Tel Armen (near the Bagdad Railway, not far from Mosul) and the neighbouring villages were massacred, with the exception of a few women and children. *Human beings were thrown alive into wells or burnt.* It is said that the Armenians are to be colonists in districts some twenty-four or thirty kilometres distant from the Bagdad Railway. But, as only women and children are deported, because all men with the exception of the old are at the war, this is equivalent to murdering the families, since no labour and no money are to be had for the cultivation of the land. A German met a soldier he knew, who had come from Jerusalem on leave.

The man was wandering about by the Euphrates looking for his wife and children, who were reported to have been sent to this district. One often meets such unfortunate beings at Aleppo, because they believe that there they will be able to hear of the abode of their relatives. It has repeatedly occurred that one member of a family, after an absence of some time, has found one of his people, who in the meantime had been carried off. For a whole month one saw almost daily bodies drifting down the River Euphrates, often tied together in twos or even in sixes. The bodies of men very much mutilated (genital parts cut off, and so on), the bodies of women with the abdomen cut to pieces. The Turkish 'military gravedigger'—Kaimakanin Djerabulus—on the Euphrates consequently refuses to let the bodies be interred, because, with regard to the men, he cannot discover if they were Mahommedans or Christians; moreover, he has no orders. The bodies which are washed ashore by the water are devoured by dogs and vultures. *For these facts there are numerous eye-witnesses* (*Germans*). An official of the Bagdad Railway stated that at Diredjik the prisons are filled day by day, and that they are emptied at night

(Euphrates). *A German cavalry captain* saw innumerable unburied bodies lying along the road between, Diarbekir and Urfa."

* * * * *

Extract from a letter of July 7, 1916, from Dr. Græter, teacher at the German Secondary School at Aleppo :

" And now, at the special request of Mrs. A., I beg to give you further facts about the stories of the Armenians in general. This time it is not one of the time-honoured massacres, but nothing more nor less than the extermination of the Armenian people in Turkey, as the Turkish officials from Talaat Bey to the lowest gendarme admit with the greatest cynicism *and the German Consuls with some embarrassment.* It was asserted at first that they only wished to clear the war zone and assign new abodes to the emigrants, and a beginning was made with the mountaineers most fit for military service, whom with the help of the American missionaries and *a German Consul* they enticed out of their rocky aeries. Then followed banishment everywhere, even from the regions which the war will never reach, and how it is carried out

is shown by the fact that of 18,000 who were banished from Kharput and Sivas, only 350 persons reached Aleppo ; of 1,900 from Erzerum, only 11 persons. Moreover, at Aleppo the poor wretches were not at the end of their sufferings. Those who did not die here—the cemeteries are full to overflowing—were driven on to the Syrian steppe towards Zor, on the Euphrates, where a small percentage is pining away and fighting against starvation.

"I tell you this on the evidence of my own eyes. I was in that district in October last year and saw many bodies of Armenians floating in the Euphrates or lying on the steppe. The Germans—with a few praiseworthy exceptions—remain passive and explain: 'We need the Turks just now!' I know also that an official of the German Cotton Company and another of the Bagdad Railway were forbidden by their superiors to help the Armenians ; that German officers complained of the friendliness of the German Consul towards the Armenians ; that a German teacher, although very efficient, lost his post at a school belonging to the German-Turkish Society because his wife was an Armenian. It was feared that the Turks

might take offence. The Turks are not so considerate.

"It is a matter of Turkish home politics, we must not interfere!" This is how one hears the Germans excuse themselves. But when it was a question of persuading the Armenians to submit, then they interfered. And when the Armenians of Urfa, who had seen how their kinsmen from other districts had fared, refused to leave their town and offered resistance, no less a person than Count Wolf von Wolfskehl had the town bombarded, and after a thousand Armenian men had surrendered, he was unable to prevent their being slaughtered.

Unfortunately, the position is such that one cannot hope for better times for the Armenian people. High prices everywhere, growing discontent, the approach of the Russians, all this is not very promising. *Only the Germans would be able to do something now that they have so many troops in Turkey.* Many Armenians are still alive. There are still a few Homes for Children which the Turks have not plundered; on the Bagdad Railway there are still at work a few thousand men, women, and children, *who are a thorn in the flesh of the Turkish authorities.*

Must they too die before long or be compelled to become Mohammedans? This is the anxious question every one in Turkey with human and Christian feelings is asking himself."

* * * * *

Extract from *Sonnenaufgang*, the organ of the *Deutscher Hilfsbund für christliches Liebeswerk im Orient*, September 1, 1915:

"MARACH, *June 4th.*—We received recently fifteen infants. Three have already died; they were frightfully thin and wretched when they were found. Oh, if we could write about all we see! . . .

"At Aleppo and Urfa the caravans of the deported Armenians are collected. From April to July there have passed through here about fifty thousand people. The girls have almost all been carried off by soldiers or the Arabian auxiliaries. A desperate father begged me to take his daughter aged fifteen with me, whom he could not protect against attempts to violate her. The children left behind on the road after the caravan are innumerable. Women who give birth on the way must continue their march immediately. Near Aintab a woman gave birth to twins in the night.

Next morning she had to continue the march; soon she had to leave her little ones under a bush; a little further on she herself fell down. Another gave birth whilst *walking*, had to go on, and soon fell down dead. Several similar cases have occurred between Marach and Aleppo.

"The inhabitants of Shaar received permission to take their household furniture with them. During the march the order was given to leave the road and to continue along mountain paths. They had to leave everything behind on the road, carts, oxen, household furniture and so on, and to continue the march on foot in the mountains. On account of the heat many women and children soon died.

"There is no news of the thirty thousand Armenians deported from this district; they have not arrived either at Aleppo or Urfa."

* * * * *

I might continue to quote. Amongst my witnesses is a Miss Wedel-Jarlsberg, a *German Red Cross* nurse. But she is a Norwegian, and consequently you will probably attach no importance to her evidence. I might reprint bundles of evidence from American missionaries, but can

Americans tell the truth? I am sure you do not rely on them, except when they assure you that there is sufficient food in Syria for three years to come. Or when they otherwise corroborate what you and the Germans wish to be true. I do not dare to think of quoting French or English witnesses. As far as that goes, you would then only begin to talk about the South African War or the Indian Mutiny in the 'fifties.

And the accounts of the Armenians themselves are, of course, of no importance. They are a doomed, a deserted, a lost nation. They have been unable to keep themselves up in the struggle for life, they have happened to get under the express with the German commercial travellers on board. They are dead, and the dead have no right to express an opinion. What does it say in one of our old rhyming chronicles?

> Time it goes from man
> Then is he little heard.

And you have never been at your ease with those who have had some misfortune in life. You have no time. You are in such haste to drink champagne with those who have won victories.

However, even the dead may be permitted to say a few words to us who live and triumph. Afterwards the Armenian nation shall not continue to trouble us or you or the German-Turks. The Armenians practically do not exist any longer in Turkey. The little massacres under Abdul Hamid were hasty and careless work, just what might be expected of Orientals. The latest massacre of the Armenians is an efficient piece of work, carried out with German thoroughness and organization. Telephone, telegraph, railways, the art of the printer, all the resources of civilization have been made use of to attain this good result. And since April 1915 your good friend Talaat Bey has, so to speak, *murdered mechanically over a million Armenians, men, women, and children.*

He is a man of iron, your friend Talaat, "a man who does not shrink from the responsibility." But even he may well feel tired now. Otherwise he would not deny his own work. He is reported to have complained to a German journalist who interviewed him that the Kurds had misunderstood his order. He, Talaat—who at bottom has a soft heart—"has not had a wink of sleep for many nights."

So now the Kurds know whose turn will come next. The Kurds are not Mongols either, but belong to the Aryan race. They, like the Armenians, are indisputably a strain on the pure race and otherwise unblemished escutcheon of Turkey. "First the Armenians, then the Kurds" —this is what is already being said amongst the Turkish officers. From which we see that the Turk does not like foreigners. We wonder whether he is not concealing some plot against you, for you are in a certain measure and to a certain percentage a European. "And then the Europeans" is how the Turkish officers will probably complete the climax.

Do not trust your friend Talaat *too* blindly, Sven Hedin! He is—witness the Kurd Cherif Pasha, formerly Turkish Minister at Stockholm —very supple and treacherous. He is ambitious, and more of a Pan-Turk than of a German-Turk. In 1908 he was only a copyist in the Turkish Postal Service at Constantinople, with 120 francs a month. He made his way by a series of political assassinations. He and his friend Enver in person murdered Nazim Pasha, the Minister for War, on January 23, 1913.

With regard to your friend Enver, he is of

frail constitution and somewhat hysterical. Such a man can no doubt display energy, but he is not very reliable. As the national hero of Tripoli he certainly did not attain his end : the expulsion of the Italians. He won something else instead, namely, a large fortune, which is always something. Then he became Military Attaché at Berlin, and a good friend of your mutual friend the German Crown Prince. By that I do not wish to insinuate that either the German Crown Prince or Sven Hedin inspired him to murder Nazim. But it was Enver who fired the first shot.

Bah ! you say, Nazim was a traitor. Yes, those who happen to be unfortunate are usually styled thus. If Nazim had succeeded in defeating your friends the Bulgarians he would have been a great man.

Now Nazim is dead and the Armenians are dead. The old is past. A new time is beginning, May it be merciful to your illusions ! It has crushed all those of the poor Armenians. Listen to their swan-song, Sven Hedin, in this manifesto :

"A day of mourning is celebrated by the remnants of a civilized nation, whose extermination was completed before the eyes of a humanity

which boasts of its systems of morality, its academies, its art, and its geniuses. We cease our work and lay our hands in our lap for a whole day. The civilized world, which is alone responsible for the mutilation of our nation, has dealt us such a blow that henceforward we must hate everything, even work. We no longer believe either in science or in progress, for the scientific world also bears the responsibility for the crime. Henceforward it is all over with all moral doctrines, all virtues and principles, all confessions of faith for the peoples, both governors and governed, for everything has been polluted by the filth of political hypocrisy and of general moral dissolution. . . .

"But *History* still lives, the judge who sits enthroned above our purblind age. May this judge *History* perpetuate the dishonour of humanity, may future generations read with horror of the atrocities which have now taken place, may they learn that their fathers encouraged the crime, leagued themselves together against a whole people, and may there prevail in the consciousness of these new generations an infinite contempt for their fathers!"

* * * * *

You smile scornfully, Sven Hedin, for you are incapable of being moved. Bah, sentimentality! You accept with equanimity this solemn curse, which falls in equal measure on the powerless Entente and the passive Central Powers.

But you are mistaken in this also. It is true that in past years England and France unwisely and unrighteously opposed Russia's intervention in Turkey. But England and France have seen their mistake late in the day, and they have had to pay dearly for it. They have left behind a large part of their fleet and their troops at the entrance to the straits they themselves helped to fortify. In a certain measure, they share the responsibility for their defeat in the Dardanelles. And it was this defeat, called by you "*one of the finest exploits in the war,*" which gave your friends the Turks the courage and the desire to exterminate the Christian nation which had so long been protected by England, France, and Russia. . . .

There is, however, a difference between having *to pay for* the mistakes of the past and *taking advantage* of the villainous work of one's allies. It is the latter that the Germans and Austrians are doing. Armenia was a mountain-gate as high

as the clouds, which is now shattered and forced open. Through the opening a glimpse is caught of the Persian Gulf, and beyond that the Indian dominion which the Germans long for so eagerly, and where they perhaps dream of Armenian massacres on an even vaster scale.

The Germans, who were passively cognizant and the organizing instructors, not least on the Belgian scene of murder, are co-responsible for the destruction of the Armenian nation. As far as the Russians are concerned, their conquests in the past have saved for life and civilization hundreds of thousands of Armenians who now dwell in security. And in this war their advancing armies have saved new hosts of Armenian fugitives. The French and English have not merely *talked* on behalf of the unfortunate Armenians in embassies and consulates. They have often intervened actively to save them. I will not weary you with descriptions of an exploit performed during Abdul Hamid's massacres by the *wife of the French Consul at Diarbekir*—she who, at the risk of her life and those of her four little children, escorted three hundred Armenians in safety to Alexandretta. Nor will I take up space with an account of the heroic struggle of four thousand

Armenians on Moussa Dagh in July 1915, and their deliverance from the siege by the French cruiser *Sainte Jeanne d'Arc*. The French-English forces, which have had against them a professional fighter who has been in special training for a hundred years, have not been able to appear with sufficient strength on any theatre of war but the one just outside their own doors. They have therefore had to look on paralysed at many things which must fill all Europeans with shame.

So you cannot flatter yourself that you have so very many supporters, Sven Hedin. Only Germans and Turks now think as you do. And *you*, too, share their responsibility, just you. Few voices would have roused such an echo as yours, if you had permitted your conscience to make use of it. You have silenced the inward monitor, you have shown neither a sense of justice, nor sympathy, nor compassion with the oppressed, whose blood was mingled with your champagne! You are a historian, I suppose, and in large school-book outlines you have brought together the events of various centuries on the soil you last trod. You have touched on the story of Jesus and his Mother, nor have you forgotten Simon the tanner. You only seem to have forgotten Simon Peter,

he who denied his Master and Friend by the watch-fire of the High Priest.

But it is true: your master probably never lived at Nazareth, he lived at Halle. And your soul, well, it is Bernhardi-German and would make Schiller—the honorary citizen of the French Republic, the ideologist, the hater of tyranny, the fugitive from the hell of the German soldier's drill—renounce with a shudder his German citizenship. Yes, you are a German, Sven Hedin; that is the only excuse I can find when I now look back on what you have said, written, and done since 1909. You are a German; that explains your Swedish policy, the Palace Courtyard policy, and likewise your German policy, anti-Belgian and anti-Armenian. You are a German partly in your extraction, entirely in your views. You have the confused German logic, the bombastic German Court style, and the German cool impertinence.

CHAPTER XII

THE AUTHOR DISCLAIMS SVEN HEDIN

As I now put pen to paper in order to conclude, my thoughts hasten back to that festive evening at Lund, when for the first time I heard you criticized. I remember my exasperation, my defence of you, and my poem in your honour, which had its source in my exasperation.

I also remember the others, every word, every mien, which then seemed so repulsive to me.

"As a scholar," said Professor Y., "Sven Hedin is perhaps somewhat reckless. He strikes at random now and then, sees everything in large outlines, is not a little of a dilettante, in spite of all his reading and his travels."

A *dilettante*—to-day I hear this judgment without exasperation. To-day I find it quite to the point.

"The results," said Professor Å., "would often be scanty, if he did not possess his flow of words."

Flow of words—just imagine that others thus saw through your importance seven years ago! If it was envy which made them sharp-sighted, it was really sharp-sighted envy!

And my friend the painter, whom I found the most uncongenial of all, how truly, how shrewdly he characterized you and your character!

"He is a braggart, I think," my friend T. said of you, and added: "*Confound it! that such a fellow should represent Sweden and Swedish ways! People abroad will have an entirely mistaken idea of us Swedes.* We do not bawl like that. We do not swallow flattery and distinctions as blotting-paper swallows ink—he is no Swede, I say! He has even let himself be made a noble—bah!"

I could smile, I could laugh—were I not at this moment so distressed on your account, on my account, on Sweden's account. I could smile at my friend the painter's skill in hitting you off with a few words. He saw right through you, Sven Hedin.

But in reality, in reality—I confess it with some humiliation—that art was not especially difficult. Whoever has seen you, heard you speak, read one of your books with calm criticism, can

immediately classify you. And you will not be put down as a Swede, least of all as a great Swede.

My excuse, if it is an excuse, is, that I had not seen you, not heard you speak, not read you critically at that time. I did not know you, and ought to have waited with my pæans until I had made your acquaintance. Then, without the slightest doubt, I should have saved them.

There were foreigners present on that occasion. That was not without influence. I am afraid that we all became too practical—we were unwilling to surrender the passing glory which your honours cast on the Swedish name. We shut our eyes a little, we deliberately deceived ourselves—at least some of us did; for my part, I was full of hero-worship, and still am perhaps, but I have learnt to be more careful in my classification since my misfortune with you.

I am still indifferent as to your extraction: you might have been an excellent Swede for all that. In the veins of Bellman, Geijer, Gustavus Adolphus, and Charles XII, there ran foreign blood, and yet they represented the Swedish spirit quite well. They did not bring shame on us, they were great men or fools in the eyes of the world,

but what then! What they sought were perhaps vain things, but they were things raised above Court favour and princely patronage. And whatever they worshipped—it was not a German Emperor, and still less the goddess Fortune.

But, leaving your admiration on one side, Sven Hedin, you might have been Kaiser Wilhelm's friend and told him the necessary truth. You might have loved the peoples of the East without flattering like an Oriental. You might have done whatever you chose, you might have been as lacking in judgment, as politically naïve as you have shown yourself to be, if only you had not remained mute in view of all the misery which your powerful friends had caused, if only you had not toned down the doings in Belgium and denied them in Armenia.

The Swedish people has made a number of mistakes during these years, but I will not repeat the charges I made in *Who is Right in the World-War?* We have had our punishment, and *the heaviest part of the punishment is perhaps that you have come to represent us in the eyes of the world.* It is hard, it is perhaps unjust, we should like to cry aloud and protest. You do not represent us; we are not like you, we

are many times better. We see with your example before us how worthless a great reputation often is as evidence. And apart from your partisans, who are a clique, though a powerful clique, it is true, the Swedish people as a majority, as a whole, has nothing in common with you either in opinions, aims, or disposition. No man in the deep ranks of the people is so childish in thought and so poor in feeling as you are. You have not the Swedes behind you: they left you behind long ago. They do not recognize you as their leader or representative. They are unwilling that other countries should believe that you and they have anything in common. You have denied humanity, Sven Hedin, and in return you are denied to-day by the Swedish people. We do not know you. What do your discoveries matter to us? What does it interest us whether you have discovered both Tibet and China? You have not discovered Armenia, you have been unable to find Serbia, and you have driven over the ruins of Belgium without even being able to discover your heart.

It is this which is the decisive factor, Sven Hedin: without a sincere quest of the truth no one is a *scholar*, and without a heart no one is

a *nobleman.* You yourself shattered your escutcheon on that occasion when you saw the globe being devastated, and instead of protesting, concluded a friendly alliance with the devastators !

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WITH YOU, RIGHT THROUGH

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